THE BAKER'S DOZEN

A history of the Mott family from the year 1809, through 1960, with special reference to life on a farm in Jefferson Township, Mahaska County, Iowa, beginning about 1860.

BY

Frank Leslie Mott,
One of the Lucky 13.

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Frank Leslie Mott

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The baker's dozen; a history of the Mott family from the year 1809 through 1960, with special reference to life on a farm in Jefferson township, Mahaska County, Iowa, beginning about 1880. [n.p., 1960?]

106 p. map. 28 cm.

FOREWARD

This is a story of the George Keeler and the Aaron Mott families from the birth of George Keeler Mott, in the state of Vermont in the year 1809, down to the year 1960.

It is a story of pioneers moving westward from the state of Vermont into the new state of Ohio, carved from the Northwest Territory after the American Revolution. The next generation moved from Ohio to the new state of Iowa, traveling with a team of horses and covered wagon, progressing little more than fifteen miles per day.

It is a story of life on the farm in Jefferson Township, Mahaska County, Iowa, from the early 1880's to the death of Aaron Mott in 1925.

It also shows how families of the present day are scattered throughout the entire United States. During the life of the author the following names have been joined to the name of Mott through marriage: Elder, Stroud, Martin, Harding, Thomas, Pike, Newett, Zigler, Kraft, McCormack, Wills, Durrant, and Greguson.

The story shows how individual families were effected by the Civil War, World War I and World War II.

The author shows how a farm family of one or two generations ago produced and processed most of its own food, while working with little capital and simple machines. Such a family produced only a little more food than it consumed, hence there were many farmers. Today farms have become much larger. Farm machines have become much more complicated and many, many times as expensive. The farm family now produces so much more than it consumes that many persons have been driven from the farms to find a livelihood in towns and cities.

CHAPTERS

BIOGRAPHIES

FAMILY STATISTICS

Aaron Coleman Mott

Father of the Baker's Dozen

MAP

Jefferson Township, Mahaska County, Iowa.

This map was drawn in the year 1913. It shows the location of the 120 acre farm bearing the name of A. C. Mott. This farm was in my father's possession from 1879 until his death in 1925. The estate was sold by the administrator in 1928.

Thirteen children grew up on this farm. All, but one, were born in the house on this farm.

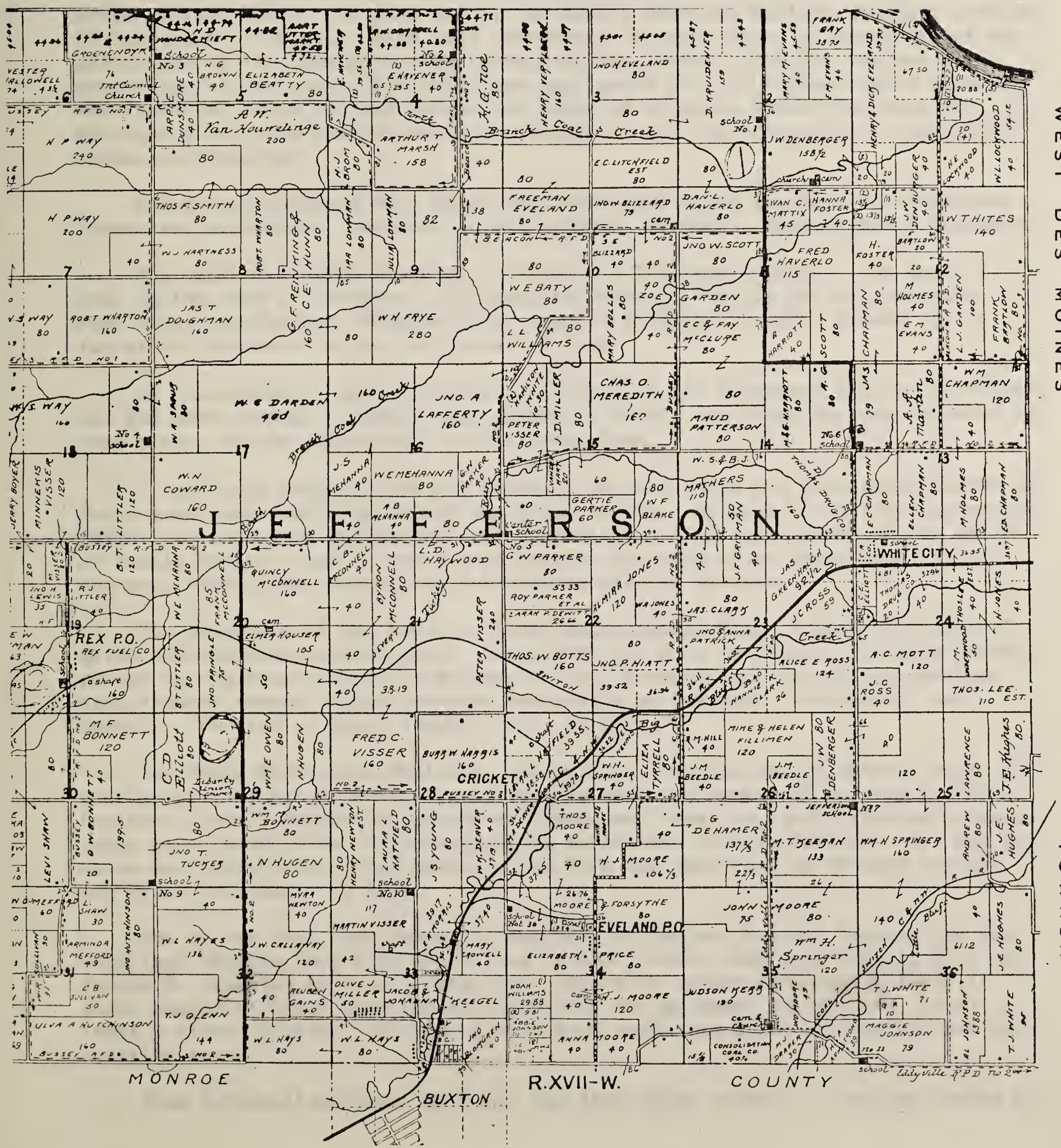
Land just north of us was owned by the Thomas Drug Company. Just north of that land was the coal mining camp, White City. The map shows the location of the Northwestern Railroad, which crossed the township in two places. There was a railroad Y at Laconta, about four miles east of our farm. The mining towns of Cricket and Buxton are shown.

The Jefferson School is shown to the south of our place. We attended school a few times at the Fairview school, north of White City. School No. 4, known as the Brock school was where I had my first experience as a country school teacher. I taught the next year at the Center school, near the center of the township.

The map shows the R. F. D. Route No. 2 coming into the township from Eddyville, just east of the Fairview school, going south past our farm. It continued on south and west to the church, known as the Bethel Church, thence east back towards Eddyville. Before the establishment of this route, in 1903, we had to go to the local postoffice for our mail. This postoffice, called the Eveland Postoffice, was first located at the corner one half mile west of the Jefferson school. Later it was moved about one mile farther south to the store of John Moore.

The coal camp of Greenridge is not shown on this map but the Greenridge mine took coal from land just a short distance southeast of our south farm corner.

Many of the land owners' names shown on this map are remembered by our family.


WEST DES MOINES TOWNSHIP
JEFFERSON
MONROE
COUNTY
R.XVII-W.
BUXTON
REX P.O.
CRICKET
EVELAND P.O.
WHITE CITY
Branch Coal Creek
Big Creek
North Branch Coal Creek
Switch
Eddyville R.F.D. No 2
A. M. Van Houweling 200
ARTHUR T MARSH 158
ELIZABETH BEATTY 80
E. HAVENER 40
H. G. Noe 80
HENRY VEPPLER 160
JNO. H. EVELAND 80
D. H. PULDEMLEY 159
FRANK GAY 38 75
J. W. DENBERGER 158½
E. C. LITCHFIELD EST 80
FREEMAN EVELAND 80
JNO. W. BLIZZARD 79
DAN'L. HAVERLO 80
IVAN C. MATTIX 45
HANNA FOSTER 40
FRED HAVERLO 115
JNO. W. SCOTT 80
GARDEN 80
EC & FAY McCLURE 80
W. E. BATY 80
L. L. WILLIAMS
WM. H. FRYE 280
JAS. T. DOUGHMAN 160
ROBT. WHARTON 160
W. J. HARTNESS 80
THOS. F. SMITH 80
H. P. WAY 240
H. P. WAY 200
W. G. DARDEN 400
JNO. A. LAFFERTY 160
CHAS. O. MEREDITH 160
MAUD PATTERSON 80
W. S. & B. J. MATHERS 110
W. N. COWARD 160
W. E. MEHANNA 80
GERTIE PARKER 60
W. F. BLAKE 80
QUINCY McCONNELL 160
L. D. HAYWOOD
G. W. PARKER 80
ROY PARKER ET AL 53.33
ELMER HOUSER 105
THOS. W. BOTTS 160
JNO. P. HIATT 80
JAS. CLARK
ALICE E. ROSS 124
A. C. MOTT 120
THOS. LEE 110 EST.
M. F. BONNETT 120
C. D. ELLIOTT 80
FRED C. VISSER 160
BURR W. HARRIS 160
W. H. SPRINGER 40
ELIZA TYRRELL 80
M. HILL 40
MIKE & HELEN FILLIMEN 120
J. M. BEEDLE 40
J. W. DENBERGER 80
LAWRENCE 80
J. E. HUGHES 80
LEVI SHAW
W. M. BONNETT 80
JNO. T. TUCKER
N. HUGEN 80
LAURA L. HATFIELD 80
J. S. YOUNG 80
THOS. MOORE 40
H. J. MOORE 106⅔
G. DEHAMER 137⅔
M. T. KEEGAN 133
WM. H. SPRINGER 160
ANDREW 80
J. E. HUGHES
W. L. HAYES 136
J. W. CALLAWAY 120
MARTIN VISSER
ELIZABETH PRICE 80
JOHN MOORE 80
WM. H. Springer 120
T. J. GLENN 144
ULVA A. HUTCHINSON 160
W. L. HAYS 80
REUBEN GAINS 40
OLIVE J. MILLER 50
JACOB & JOHANNA KEEGEL
ANNA MOORE 40
HUDSON KERR 190
T. J. WHITE 71
MAGGIE JOHNSON 79
T. J. WHITE
AL JOHNSON 63.88
W. H. HAYS 80
CONSOLIDATION COAL CO. 40¼
School No 1
School No 2
School No 3
School No 4
School No 6
School No 9
School No 10
School No 30
Jefferson School
Center School
Liberty Union Church
Church
Cem.
Shaft
Coal Bluff

FAMILY HISTORY

My children, you have a heritage of which you need not be ashamed. The name of Mott can be traced back to the time of the invasion of England by William the Conqueror. The Mott tribe was in the American colonies long before the American Revolution. During the Revolution there were a number of army officers in the Colonial forces who wore the name of Mott.

A number of authorities mention the fact that in early times the name was often spelled Motte. On page 138 of the Barnes American History, which I studied in the country school, I find this statement, "Another story illustrative of the patriotism of the southern women is told of Mrs. Motte. The British had taken possession of her house, fortified and garrisoned it. On Colonel Lee's advance, she furnished him a bow and arrows, by means of which he threw fire upon the shingled roof. The mansion was soon in flames, and the occupants, to save their lives, surrendered."

Since revolutionary days there have been many Motts who have distinguished themselves as authors, lawyers, social workers, soldiers, farmers and businessmen.

The name of Coleman has been prominent in American history. The same is true of the name of Crabtree. Although the name of Plum is not so prominent, your great grandfather, Abraham Plum, born in Virginia in 1812, became one of the sturdy pioneers in the settlement of Iowa.

On your mother's side you should be proud of the Gregusons and the Andersons, who had nerve enough to leave their homes in Norway and cross the sea in order to make a home on the virgin soil in Northwest Iowa.

I very much regret I did not begin to collect facts for this story thirty or forty years ago, while my father was still living. He used to tell me his grandfather was a soldier in the American Revolution. If I had thought of the value of family history then, I would have learned the name of my great grandfather, and many other facts father would have been glad to give me.

The Daughters of the American Revolution Lineage Book, Volume 80, page 140, gives the following information: "John Mott was born in France. In 1818 he was placed on the pension list in Rutland County, Vermont, because of his services with Vermont troops in the American Revolution as Sergeant, Lieutenant, and Captain. He died at Mount Vernon, Ohio, in 1831."

The State Historical Building, Des Moines, Iowa has the enlistment paper my grandfather, George K. Mott, signed when he became a member of Company E. 37th. Regiment, Iowa Infantry Volunteers at Oskaloosa, Iowa, in 1862. This enlistment paper gives grandfather's place of birth as Rutland County, Vermont. His age is given as fifty-three. This means he was born the same year as Abraham Lincoln and Cyrus McCormack, in 1809.

Due to the fact that George K. was born in Rutland County, Vermont, at the time that Captain John Mott was living in that county, and both Captain Mott and George K. migrated to Knox County, Ohio, where my father was born in 1847, it seems highly probable that Captain John Mott was my great grandfather, or at least a close relative. So far, I have been unable to prove the captain was any relation to us.

From information father gave me, and from other sources, I learned George K.

Mott married Mary E. Coleman from the state of Connecticut. George K. was about five feet, eight inches in height. He normally weighed about one hundred and sixty. Mary Coleman was a tall woman with large bone structure.

George had six children; George Mason, Delilah, Amy, Aaron, Sylvester and John. At least Amy and Aaron seemed to get their weight and height from the Coleman side. Aaron was six feet tall and until middle life weighed from one hundred and seventy-five to one hundred and eighty pounds. At one time Amy weighed three hundred. Mason was rather short but pretty heavy. John was built more like his father.

In 1849, when father was two years old, the gold rush had started for California. I do not know that grandfather ever thought of going clear to California, but he did join the westward movement that year. He put his wife and his four or five children, into a covered wagon, hitched up his team of horses and started to the new state of Iowa.

I know very little about the trip, but father told me it took about six weeks. I have heard recently, through a cousin of mine, that Sylvester died on the trip. The family buried him beside the road between Eddyville and Oskaloosa. They marked the place and went on to their destination in Oskaloosa. Later, they went back to dig up the body and bury it in a regular cemetery. All trace of the grave had been erased. It was never found.

Sister, Hazel, found a very interesting paper among the things father used to keep in his trunk. It is a land patent granted to George K. Mott, May 1, 1851, for 40 acres of land, located as the Southeast 1/4 of the Southeast 1/4 of Section Two, Township 74, North, Range 16 West. This paper, issued by the Federal Land Office, Fairfield, Iowa, is signed by President Millard Fillmore. It states George K. Mott paid the full price for the forty acres. I understand the going price of land, purchased from the Federal government, at that time, was one dollar and one quarter per acre. I suppose the total forty acres cost grandfather fifty dollars.

In checking the records of the Johnson Abstract Co. in Oskaloosa, I find grandfather sold this land July 2, 1853, to Nathan Crispin. The deed was recorded on August 2 of that year. In the year 1959, grandfather's forty was owned by Daniel L. and Gwen Davis. It is located just north, of what is shown on some of the older county maps, as the Givin School District. The Davis farm is now a part of the Eddyville Community School District.

So far as I know, grandfather never bought any other Iowa land. Most of the time the family lived on rented farms. They moved quite frequently.

Ten years after reaching Iowa the family heard rumors of Civil War. Abraham Lincoln was elected president in 1860 and soon the war was on. Troops began drilling at the fair grounds in Oskaloosa. Aaron knew a number of the young men who enlisted and went away to fight. Just one week before his fifteenth birthday, in 1862, he had a talk with his father. He said he wanted to enlist. At that time he was nearly six feet tall, still rather slender, but he could have passed the recruiting sergeant as eighteen.

He was quite serious in his desire to become a soldier. Grandfather told him he did not want him to go. Aaron's reply was, "There are two of us here. I think one of us should go." Grandfather asked, "Will you stay with the family and help them all you can if I go?" Aaron stated many times afterwards, he had no idea that grandfather had any intention of going, so he replied, "Yes, I will stay if you go."

That very day grandfather became a member of Company E. 37th. Iowa Infantry Volunteers, (Known as the Graybeard regiment, because every man was over forty-five.) They were recruited for prison guard duty to relieve younger men for field duty.

Grandfather's Thoughts
(While in camp 1862-1865)

They call me an old graybeard. You ask me why I am here,
Away from home and family, and all that life holds dear.

Why did I join the colors, at the age of fifty-three?
I was thinking of my little boy, I held upon my knee.

He thinks that now he is a man, though only age fifteen.
I could not see him march to war, if you know what I mean.

He promised he would help his Ma, and always stay quite near,
If I would join the Graybeards, and that is why I'm here.

Note: On September 10, 1958, I mailed this short story to the Johnny Reb National Contest, New York, N. Y.

<u>My Favorite Civil War Personality</u>

Aaron Coleman Mott

"He was fifteen in 1862, and wanted to be a soldier. His father joined the <u>Iowa Graybeards</u>, so he kept a son's promise to help support the family.

During that entire winter he hauled freight, with team and wagon, between Oskaloosa and Ottumwa, Iowa, thirty miles distance. Three round trips were made per week, and he spent three nights per week in Ottumwa. The roads were often bad, either rough, muddy or snowy. He had full responsibility for the team and load. Net earnings, one dollar per day, were much needed by my grandmother's family."

I won a placing in this contest and secured a small prize. I give the write-up here to show some of the hardships that boys endured during that great Civil War, even though they did not wear a uniform or qualify for a soldier's pension.

Grandfather was discharged, for physical disability, at Columbus, Ohio, very early in 1865. He came home broken in health. He died eight years later, in 1873 at the hospital for the insane at Mount Pleasant, Iowa. He is buried in the cemetery at Oskaloosa, near the Penn College grounds.

After grandfather's return from service, father went back to school for one winter term. Any other knowledge he gained in life came through reading and self study.

Mason Mott was married before grandfather joined the army. Amy and Delilah both married later. John was born after the family reached Iowa. He was five years younger than Aaron. With grandfather unable to make a living for the family, that placed a heavy burden upon Aaron. He and John supported his mother until Aaron got married. Even after his marriage Aaron furnished a home for his mother until her death about 1890.

AARON COLEMAN MOTT

He was born on a farm in Mills Township, Knox County, Ohio, September 11, 1847. He died of pneumonia in the University Hospital at Iowa City, Sunday morning, May 3, 1925.

After the Mott family came to Iowa, from Ohio, they sometimes lived in log cabins, heated by a fireplace in one end of the room. Aaron wore wool (homespun) clothing, made by his mother and sister. He wore wool socks and mittens, knitted by his mother. His feet were clad in cowhide leather boots.

While growing up he learned to cut grass with a scythe, and to bind grain by hand, following the selfrake reaper or riding the Marsh harvester. He soon learned to swing an ax and chop wood for fuel. During his lifetime, he, undoubtably, split more wood rails than Abraham Lincoln ever did.

He was forty years and three months older than I. I knew him best when he was between the ages of forty-five and sixty. One reason he did not marry until he was nearly thirty-six, was because he supported his mother for years after the Civil War.

At the age of thirty-six he stood six feet tall, barefooted. He weighed 175-180 pounds. He had large bones and powerful muscles. He wore a number twelve shoe and a number eleven glove. The bone and muscle of his forearm was so large he had difficulty buying a shirt with a sleeve large enough for his arm. Mother usually made his shirts. He had heavy, wavy, dark brown hair, and heavy beard. He usually wore a mustache, trimmed short, and chin whishers. He shaved his cheeks.

He was the athletic type, a good short-distance runner and a good walker. He enjoyed swimming at the old swimming hole, in the creek or river. Until he was sixty, he did nearly all his field work while walking behind his plows and harrows. When seeding oats, or grass seed, he walked across the field and scattered the seed by hand, like the man in the picture of the Parable of the Sower.

He must have been about fifty when he tied a long rope to the horns of a young cow, he had sold, and led her about fifteen miles to deliver her to the new owner, near Oskaloosa. After delivering the cow, he stopped in Oskaloosa and bought his supper. After dark, on that mild winter night, he walked back home. He had traveled nearly thirty miles on foot.

As a young man he learned to turn handsprings and sumersaults. He enjoyed watching tumbling and trapeze exhibitions at the circus. His back and limbs were so strong he could lift heavy loads. I have seen him lift and carry away loads, so heavy, I never could have gotten them off the ground.

He loved to pull "square-holds". This is a contest in which two men sit flat on the ground, facing each other, with their feet stretched out in front of them, the soles of their shoes touching. Both contestants take hold of a strong stick which they hold just over their toes. At a signal, both begin to pull. The one who can pull his opponant to his feet is the winner. Very few men in our locality could win from father in this contest.

By nature he was friendly and congeniel, with most folks, but he was not a man to be dominated by anyone. He told me that when he first started to school, his mother told him not to fight with other boys. There was one schoolmate who tried to play the bully and make life miserable for Aaron. One day Mason, his

brother, eleven years older than Aaron, saw it. He called Aaron to one side and said, "Don't let that kid run over you. The next time he starts something, fight him as hard as you can. If you let him whip you, I will whip you again." The next time the kid became abusive, Aaron said, "If you want to fight, come on. I can whip you." To Aaron's surprise the kid refused to fight. From that day on, Aaron seldom backed down from any man, though in the course of his lifetime he had very few physical encounters.

Although he did not have the equivalent of an eighth grade education when he quit school, he was well grounded in the three "R's", "readin', ritin', and 'rithmetic". With these, as a good foundation, he proceeded to acquire knowledge through self study. He enjoyed reading. What he read he remembered. He wrote a clear, legible hand. He was able to solve any daily business arithmetic problem he encountered.

Since he was raised in the home of a New England family, he acquired a few New England mannerisms. The one most pronounced was in his manner of speaking. He often told me of his experiences during the Civil War.

On September 8, 1862, he had a conversation with his father. This is about the way he related that conversation. "Sez, I, "Father, I want to enlist in the army." Sez, he, "Son, you are pretty young, only fifteen. I wish you would not go." Sez, I, "There are two of us here. I think one of us should go." Sez, he, "Will you stay with the family and help them all you can if I go?" Sez, I, "Yes, I will." "That very day father joined the Graybeards. I had to keep my promise. I did not become a soldier."

Father told me never to point towards a graveyard. He also told me, "Never carry an edged tool through the house."

One day he was doing a little repair work inside the house. For this work I carried a sharp chisel, or hatchet, into the house. When the work was finished, father asked me what door I entered when I came in. I told him and started to leave by another door. He called me back and said, "My folks always told me to never carry an edged tool through the house." "Take it out the same door you brought it in." What difference that would make, I have never been able to figure out.

In spite of his mannerisms he had good use of the English language. He was well versed in grammar. He often told all the members of the family what was wrong with our expressions. I believe I learned more good speech from him than from all my country school teachers.

Although he never held a teacher's certificate, he was a far better teacher than many who did. I went home from school one day wondering, "If the earth is round like a ball, people on the side opposite me must be standing upside down. Why don't they fall off?" Father said, "No difference what side of the earth you are on, down is always toward the center of the earth." "People and objects are held to the earth by the force of gravity. If we could drill a hole through the earth to China we would have to drill up after we reached the center of the earth." "What causes day and night?" was another of my questions. Father took a coal oil lamp and a ball and demonstrated how day and night are caused by the rotation of the earth.

He understood the principle of the three classes of levers, in mechanics. He used that principle when making a doubletree so each one of two horses would pull a load in proportion to his weight. He told a story of a man who had a

little horse and a big horse. He wanted to make a doubletree so each horse would pull in proportion to his weight. The man reasoned, since the little horse would pull the smallest part of the load, he should have the smallest or shortest part of the doubletree. When he hitched the horses to a heavy load he could not understand why the little horse worked so hard and the big horse worked so easily. Father could explain the action of the siphon and the lift pump and why they would not raise water more than thirty-two feet at sea level.

He had a fair knowledge of ancient history and a good knowledge of American history. He liked to talk with me about historical subjects. He read textbooks on physiology and anatomy. He encouraged the family to eat fruit, when in need of a laxative, rather than use our only standby remedy, castor oil. He was much interested in the health of each one of us. He could have been a good male nurse.

The first president he voted for was U. S. Grant. He remained with the Republican Party until the year, 1896. In that year times were hard. Farm prices were low. Interest rates were high. Money was hard to get. Father read the "Cross of Gold" speech delivered by W. J. Bryan at the Democratic National Convention, and became an ardent supporter of the Democratic cause. He was glad to argue politics with any man, and few could beat him in debate. He voted for Bryan three times. Although Bryan was never elected president, father firmly believed a number of reforms, like the election of U. S. senators by popular vote, and guaranteed bank deposits by the federal government, were forced upon Congress by the efforts of Bryan. Father served a number of terms as a member of the township trustees. Several times he was judge of local elections. At one time, before he left the Republican party, he was elected Justice of the Peace. He performed one or two marriages while in that office.

People respected his judgment. He once served on a board of arbitration to settle a dispute between a tenant and landlord. He helped solve a dispute over a line fence between neighboring farms. One of his old friends appointed him administrator of his estate by the terms of his will. Father took the job and settled the estate satisfactorily.

He dared to stand for what he thought was right,
Though all his friends in fear might slink away.
He watched alone throughout the long, dark night
And faced at dawn the light of brighter day.

In the early days of Iowa he voted for the prohibition amendment to the state constitution. His reasoning was, "A man who is controlled by the tobacco or liquor habit is not a free man, but a slave." He tried to discourage the formation of both these habits. He refused to sell or rent any of his land to be used for the sale or consumption of beer or any other kind of alcoholic beverage. He refused to help a local druggist secure a permit to sell liquor for medical purposes. Too many men got sick suddenly when they found they could buy liquor for medical purposes only.

He possessed a number of skills needed by a farmer in his day. He knew how to dig wells by hand and put in wood curbing to hold the dirt and keep the well from caving until a permanent wall could be built. He was a fair carpenter. He could lay out and cut rafters for a gable roof. He often repaired furniture, small tools, and farm machines. When he did not have a maul to use in splitting rails he took a stick of tough hickory, about six inches in diameter and three and one half feet long. He made a maul by leaving about ten inches on one end of the stick natural size. The rest of the stick was cut down just the right size for a handle. He split many rails with this maul before it wore out.

He was one of the few farmers in our locality who could stack bundle grain so the stack would stand for months and shed rain. He sometimes got extra pay stacking grain for his neighbors.

For several years he spent most of his time, during the winter months, cutting trees, hauling the wood to the house and cutting it into firewood, using either an ax or bucksaw. He was skilled in filing saws.

Compared with present day standards, he was not a good farmer. He seemed to enjoy doing hard physical work, but he usually gave the impression that he was not thoroughly in love with farming.

Given the opportunity that most boys of today have, to get high school and college training, he could have been a success as a teacher of mathematics and science, a civil enginner, or possibly a Doctor of Medicine.

Most of his gains in farming came from robbing the soil. After nearly every heavy summer rain, he remarked there should be some way to keep the good top soil from being washed away. He had not heard of strip cropping, or terracing, so he planted his corn in straight rows up and down the hill. There was a low swale that ran nearly the full length of our south forty. He knew if he ever plowed out that swale, it would soon be a big ditch. He kept it in wild bluestem or prairie grass and used that grass as hay for his horses. He also kept the roughest hills of the farm in timber. These were, and still are, good soil saving practices.

He was never much of a buyer, or speculator in grains or livestock. He was well versed in commercial law as it applied to farm practices.

Following World War I, a number of farmers over the state of Iowa became excited in the sudden rise of farm land values. They mortgaged farms that had been free of debt for years in order to buy additional land for speculation. When the price of land suddenly dropped and the price of farm produce went with it, some of these farmers lost everything they had. Father resisted the urge to speculate in the land boom. As a result, when he quit, his farm was free from all indebtedness.

He was tolerant and humanitarian in his thinking. He believed that every human being had the right to be well born, to grow up healthy and strong, with a good chance to enjoy life. Regarding the race question, he often remarked, "I have nothing against a man simply because his skin is not the color of mine."

He seemed to get a great deal of enjoyment out of life. He possessed a good sense of humor. He had one of the most hearty laughs of any man I have ever known. He enjoyed a good joke.

One of his favorite stories was about a man, who was sitting at table with another man, when the conversation turned on religion. One man picked up a piece of meat on his fork and said, "I am as sure of going to heaven, when I die, as I am that I will eat this piece of meat." In the earnestness of his statement, he waved the fork through the air. The meat fell to the floor and a dog, under the table, quickly swallowed it.

One Christmas he bought a large volume of Mother Goose Rhymes as a present for one of the children. He got a lot of pleasure from reading those rhymes. He committed most of them to memory. One he liked especially well was, "Robbin, the Bobin, the Big-Bellied Ben, who ate more meat than four score men."

He often quoted verses from Longfellow, Bryant and Whittier. He could quote the poem, "Lord Ullin's Daughter", thirteen verses in its entirety.

Some of his favorite authors were, Mark Twain, James Fenimore Cooper, Charles Dickens and Lew Wallace. He got a great deal of pleasure from reading Ben Hur. The chariot races and boxing matches, described in that book, were of special interest to him.

He was a careful observer of the weather. He sometimes remarked, "There ought to be some way to give the elements a laxative in time of drought." He had heard that the position of the new moon determined the kind of weather we would have during the next thirty days. He watched carefully and observed five new moons in succession that were standing with the point nearly straight down, so all the water could run out. For five months we had very rainy weather. He was beginning to wonder if the position of the new moon did determine the weather for the next thirty days, when he began to see other new moons standing with the point straight down and the weather in the period that followed was very dry. He decided something else must determine the weather. The moon had little to do with it.

He had a number of methods of relaxation. He was a good checker player and he seldom found anyone who could beat him consistantly at that game. When he had no other form of amusement, he loved to tackle difficult problems in arithmetic.

He worked for years trying to find a solution to a problem which was stated as follows:

"A cow is tied to a stake with a rope which is just long enough for her to graze in a circle exactly one acre in area. Later the cow is moved so she grazes on another circle the same size as the first, only the second circle overlaps the first by ten feet. Question: "What is the area of the two circles?" I have seen him sit for hours trying to think of a way to measure the arc of the overlapping circles. When I first attended school at Oskaloosa College, I gave this problem to Professor Hamilton. He gave me a copy of "Ray's Higher Arithmetic" which contained a rule for measuring the arc of a circle. With this rule the problem was quickly solved.

He was a good singer. All his children remember how we used to sit on his knee while he sang our favorite tunes.

"There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds." -- Alfred Tennyson.

He was a good student of the Bible, but a free thinker in religion. He was inclined to think in terms of pure white or pure black. Either a thing was completely right or entirely wrong. I sometimes thought he judged men in the same way. I believe that during his entire life he was trying to find and prove the Truth. He was disappointed he could not prove the theories of religion and life in the hereafter as readily as he could prove the principles of addition or square root in arithmetic. He made the remark that it would be a great comfort if he could prove, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that there is life, rest and peace beyond the grave. He finally came to the conclusion that if all men would only live by the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule, most people would be happy in this life at least. He tried hard to teach his children to tell the truth, to respect the property rights of others, and play fair with all people.

OBITUARY OF A. C. MOTT

Aaron Coleman Mott was born in Mills Township, Knox County, Ohio, September 11, 1847. He died at the University hospital at Iowa City, May 3, 1925. He had been in the hospital about four weeks, following an operation for the removal of cataracts from his eyes.

It was thought he would soon be able to leave the hospital and return home, but on last Friday the family received word he had contracted pneumonia and was in critical condition. Mrs. Mott and one son went up at once, and were with him about twenty-four hours before his death.

When about two years of age, Mr. Mott came with his parents from Ohio, the entire trip being made with team and covered wagon. The family stopped at Oskaloosa, and since that time, or for nearly seventy-five years, Mr. Mott has never had a home outside Mahaska county, until this spring when he and his family moved from the farm home in Jefferson township to Eddyville in Wapello county. The farm had been his home for nearly forty-three years.

In 1883, he was married to Harriet Virginia Plum. To this union were born two daughters, Mabel and Bertha and one son, Frank. Two years after the death of his wife, in 1889, he married Laura Ethel Stroud. To this union were born six daughters and four sons, making him the father of thirteen children, all of whom are living except the second son, Ziba, who died in 1922.

When but fifteen years of age, Mr. Mott drove a team from Oskaloosa to Ottumwa hauling freight, and in this way assisted his mother, sister and younger brother to make a living while his father, George Keeler Mott, then age fifty-three, enlisted in the Graybeard Regiment of Iowa for garrison duty in the south. During the World War, Aaron Mott remained on the farm and kept it going while four of his sons joined the colors.

He is survived by his second wife, Laura Mott, and twelve children whose names are as follows: Mrs. Mabel Stroud, Mrs. Nora Martin, Mrs. Myrtle Street, of Kansas City, Kansas, Mrs. Bertha Elder of Chariton, Mrs. Hazel Pike of Compton, California, Frank L. Mott, Mapleton, Iowa, Earl, Wesley, Edith and Ruth of Eddyville, Mrs. Pearl Thomas, Jefferson township, and Fred Mott, stationed with the U. S. Army in Maryland.

Funeral services were held from the Christian church here on Friday afternoon at 2:00 o'clock, Reverend Morrow, the pastor, officiating. Interment was made in Highland Cemetery, Eddyville, Iowa.

Note: This is copied from the Eddyville Newspaper.

MOTHER

Who was my mother? Was she the woman who gave me birth, and presented my father with his first born son? Was she the one who cared for me with all the love a mother could show for a short time, and then quietly passed from the stage of life, never to return?

Or was she the woman who came into my home soon after I was four years old, and for the next ten to fifteen years was my guide and counselor, at the same time that she was working hard to provide me with food, clothing, shelter and amusement? She watched me grow into manhood and tried, in her patient way, to encourage me to become an industrious, truthful, fair-minded man.

In many homes one woman does all these things for her son. In my case, the woman who gave me birth departed this life a few days after I was two years old. I have no recollection of her. If I had not been told, I would never have known she was my natural mother.

Obituary

"Mott-Died December 18, 1889, in Jefferson Township, Mahaska County, Iowa, of blood poison. Harriet Virginia, wife of A. C. Mott, age 33 years, 7 months, and 14 days.

The deceased was born one mile southwest of Beacon, in the year 1856, July 14 and was married to Mr. Mott in 1882. There was born to them three children, two daughters and one son, named Laura Mabel, aged 6 years, Bertha Viola, 4 years, and Frank Leslie, aged 2 years.

These dear children have lost their mother at a time and age when a mother's love and care is most needed, and Mr. Mott fully realizes the weight of responsibility that rests upon him; and thinks with the council and assistance of an aged mother, who lives with them, that he can employ help and keep the family together; certainly a good resolution.

In early life Mrs. Mott, whose maiden name was Plum, was a member of the M. E. Church, but for years since her marriage she has lived so remote from the church that it was not convenient to attend, but still kept the faith, and uniting with her husband, their joint effort, ambition and industry procured for them a comfortable home in Jefferson Township where she died.

She bore her severe affliction with patience but the thought of leaving her dear little children pressed the cup of her sorrow to her dying lips, until the very dreggs mingled with the latest breath in the agonies of death. Then she bade farewell to all and fell asleep.

The funeral was largely attended. The friends of the deceased turned out as neighbors should and the neighbors in the vicinity of the cemetery doing the same, all meeting at the place of burial. The writer made a few remarks and offered a word of prayer, the casket was lowered into the grave, and all were thanked for the expression of kindness and sympathy so clearly manifested. Mrs. Mott now sleeps in the Hennis cemetery, and her memory is cherished by all."

Note: This is a fairly accurate copy of the obituary written by Thomas Ballinger, (Father called him Uncle Tom. I do not know why) and printed in the Oskaloosa newspaper soon after the burial.

Father did attempt to keep the family together by hiring a housekeeper, but in a few months Grandmother Mott became ill. Father sent for his sister,

Amy Stuart, to come and help care for grandmother. Within a short time Aunt Amy contracted milkleg, and died before grandmother did. Thus, in less than twelve months, father lost his wife, his sister and his mother.

A short time later he hired a lady, we were told to call Aunt Perkins, for a housekeeper. A little later Laura Ethel Stroud, about seventeen years old, became our housekeeper. After a few months, when I was about four years old, Laura became father's second wife.

She was the only mother that I ever really knew. Considering she was only about eighteen when she married father, who at that time was forty-five, I think she tried very hard to be a good mother to me. Between her marriage and 1910, she had given birth to ten children of her own.

In spite of the fact that most of the time I was growing up, she was either carrying a baby or nursing one, she was able to do a tremendous amount of work. I don't know how the family could have gotten along without her being in good health.

I have met few women who could work so fast and accomplish so much downright, hard work as she did. In other chapters I tell how the family was able to live on a very small cash income, because so much food and clothing was provided by home projects. Laura was good at all of them.

In the future, unless otherwise pointed out, when I mention the term mother I will be thinking of Laura. I was often able to talk over my problems with her, better than I could talk to father, because as a woman, she seemed to understand a boy's problems pretty well. She tried to encourage me to stand on my own feet, to believe in myself and what I could do.

When nearing the age of twenty, I thought I had a chance to leave home and attend a college academy. Father discouraged me. Mother told him my younger brothers could take my place on the farm. I needed more schooling, and if I was willing to work for most of my expenses, he should let me go. This was the start of my career as a teacher in Iowa Public Schools for twenty-six years. All honor to Laura Ethel Stroud who was a good mother to me.

BUYING A FARM

"Mary, let's kill the fatted calf and celebrate this day,
For the dreadful mortgage on the farm at last is wiped away.
Don't all we Yankees celebrate the Fourth day of July,
Because 'twas then that Freedom's sun lit up our Nations's sky?
Then why should we not celebrate this day and Ne'er forget,
For is there any liberty like being out of debt?"
-- Author unknown.

One Sunday evening in September of 1903 my sister Bertha and I were riding horses to attend the Christian Endeavor at the old Bethel church. As we jogged along, I began to quote the above lines. Bertha remarked, "I hope we can say that about our farm in a few days."

There is a one hundred and twenty acre tract of land in Jefferson Township, Mahaska County, Iowa. This tract is identified in the office of the county recorder as, "The east ½ of the southwest ¼ of section 24, and the northwest ¼ of the southwest ¼ of section 24, Township 74, Range 17."

The records also show that A. C. Mott placed a $500.00 mortgage on the east half of that quarter section in the year 1879. E. B. Lindlay was the mortgagee. This mortgage was sold to G. M. Mott, father's brother, November 26, 1881, and resold to Jane Plum, my mother's sister, September 13, 1882. Satisfaction of mortgage released by Jane McFall (the former Jane Plum) October 8, 1888. This mortgage drew 10% interest.

A. C. Mott placed another mortgage on the entire farm, February 29, 1880. The morgagee in this case was Harriet V. Plum, who later became my mother. I did not find any record of satisfaction of this mortgage. I suppose when Harriet married A. C. Mott, the property was owned jointly. On November 14, 1898, A. C. Mott and Laura Mott placed a mortgage of $700.00 on the entire farm. The mortgagee was Ruth Lowman. The interest rate was 8%. It was the thought of being able to pay off this mortgage that caused the conversation quoted at the beginning of this story. So far as county records show, no other mortgage was ever placed on this farm as long as it was in the Mott name.

Even though the price paid for some of the home acres was only $7.00 per acre, it was not easy to buy a farm between 1880 and 1900. Interest rates were 8% and 10%. The price of farm products was low. In the fall of 1896 corn sold for 19 cents per bushel. Potatoes sold for 25 cents per bushel. Some years hogs sold for from 3 to 5 cents per pound. I remember riding in the farm wagon fifteen miles, when father delivered oats for 15 cents per bushel.

After 1903 father frequently borrowed money from the local banks, either in Bussey or Oskaloosa, on short term loans. The only security he gave was his personal note. In all his dealings with banks, he never had an experience with a bank failure, until after he had sold his livestock and farm equipment and moved to Eddyville. A few days after he moved he went into the Eddyville bank to cash some checks. The banker, learning father was living in Eddyville, asked Father to do his banking there. Father deposited about $1200.00. A few days later the bank closed its doors. It was not until some months after father's death that mother collected something like $120.00, (about 10% of the original deposit), from the assets of the defunct bank.

The deed for the sale of our farm to Mr. Chapman was dated November 27, 1928. This deed was recorded four days later.

During his entire lifetime, father never received a pension of any kind. He had no farm subsidy, no government price support, no soil bank payment, no Social Security, no reduction in taxes through Homestead Exemption. Yet during the years after he was thirty-five, he raised a family of 13 children, bought a one hundred and twenty acre farm, on a shoe string, and left it free from debt.

In the summer of 1959 I went back to the old farm. All the buildings we had were gone. Only a few acres of the best part of the farm were in cultivated crops. All the rest had been seeded to pasture where cattle grazed.

A wide road, suitable for large trucks, entered the farm at the gate on the highway, and extended clear across our farm, over on to the land east of us, formerly owned by Marsh Underwood. The Underwood farm was being torn up by bulldozers and draglines to take out coal from a strip mine.

I was told by an employee of the B. E. Shinn Coal Company that his company had an option on about four hundred acres of coal land on the Underwood and adjoining farms. They expected within the next two years to begin strip mining on the old Mott farm.

When father bought the farm he knew there was some coal under the land. He lived for years hoping he could sell the coal rights at a profit. There was a mine at White City, about one mile north of our farm. The Greenridge Coal Mine took coal just a few rods from the southeast corner of our land. Father never got to profit from the coal. I hate to think that those fields and meadows, where I played as a boy, and where I farmed as a young man, will soon be torn up and left just a succession of sharp ridges and deep holes. Nothing is more ugly, to my mind, than land ravaged by strip mining.

THE FARM HOME

"These and the house where I was born,
Low and little and black and old,
With children, many as it could hold." -- Alice Cary

Our house was low, and little, and black and old. It consisted of four rooms and a path. We had no running water.

To my knowledge, the outside of the house never felt one drop of paint. No brick or stone chimneys were ever built.

Two stovepipes ran straight up through the ceiling and out through the roof at the highest point. The stovepipes were carefully inspected each year. As soon as a joint of pipe showed signs of being defective it was discarded and replaced with a new one.

During all the time I was at home we had two stoves. A wood or coal burning range was in the kitchen the year round. As soon as the nights became a little frosty, the heating stove was put up in our living room. It would remain there until the days became warm in the spring. Then it was taken down and stored in one of our out buildings.

We always had wall to wall carpeting in our living room during the fall and winter months. The carpet was made by one of our neighbor ladies who had a loom for weaving rag carpets. Sometimes mother would work for weeks to get enough carpet rags, cut from discarded clothing, sewed together and wound into balls, to make the required number of pounds of carpet string. Then she would take these balls of string to the weaver where they would be woven into strips of carpet, one yard wide. These strips were sewed together, using a darning needle and carpet warp, to make a carpet the right size for the room.

Before the stove was set up in the fall, we went to the straw stack, which we always had after we had done our threshing, and brought back a large sheet full of bright, clean straw. The straw was spread evenly over the floor and the carpet was spread over it and tacked down with carpet tacks.

A zinc covered platform, about one inch thick, was placed near the center of the room. The stove was set on this platform so that sparks, falling from the stove would not set the carpet on fire.

One of the first heating stoves I can remember was a wood burner. It was oblong in shape and stood on four legs. The longer part of the stove was parallel with the floor and about ten inches above it. Big sticks of wood could be fed to the fire through a large door in one end of the stove.

When a small boy I used to love to lie on the warm carpet near this stove on a cold winter evening.

I have had a great deal of trouble in my time because I was not very good at spelling. Were it not for a good dictionary, I would not be able to do the writing I am trying to do now. But there was one word I learned to spell soon after I learned my A, B. C's. That word is Cincinnati. Cincinnati, Ohio, was cast in large letters on the side of that wood stove. Every night that I lay on the carpet near the stove, I spelled those two words over and over to myself.

When father first moved onto the farm, there were two separate, one-room houses. He moved them together and made a two-room house with a kind of leanto

shed on the north. As the family grew, and more room was badly needed, two bedrooms were added, to make the total of four rooms.

The kitchen was large enough to serve as a dining room. The floor space was about 14 by 16 feet. The living room was nearly as large. The two bedrooms were each about 8 by 14 feet. In this house we often had six beds. Two were in the living room and two in each bedroom.

During the first twenty years of my life, I never slept at home on anything but a straw mattress. Mother made a large bag from bed ticking, the size to fit the bed, and thick enough to hold several inches of straw. About the time we put up the heating stove, all the bed ticks would be emptied and washed. The old straw would be burned outside the house. Then the clean ticks would be filled so full of bright, clean straw that for the first night or two a little kid would have trouble climbing into it. But the straw would gradually pack down until the next spring. At house cleaning time all the ticks would get another cleaning and filling.

The walls of our house were built with 2 by 4's for studding. Building paper was nailed to the outside of the studding and covered with weather boarding. The inside of the studding was covered with wood lathe and plaster. There was no extra insulation like on houses of today.

On the coldest winter days we kept warm by burning lots of fuel. Father was always very cautious about fire. He never left the fires burning all night unless someone was sick and it was necessary for some member of the family to remain awake.

Regardless of the cold, both fires were allowed to go out soon after bedtime. It sometimes required a big pile of bed clothes to keep us warm, but mother always managed to have the covers. As the family grew she made and quilted many quilts, each with a distinct pattern, like the Log Cabin, the Monkey Wrench, and others. The number of covers on the bed was determined by the temperature for the night.

For some reason the family had the notion that fresh air was vital to health. Unless the weather was very stormy, a window would be left partly open all night. After I had been working away from home for a few years, I went home for a visit. I slept in bed with brother Ziba. Wesley and Fred were sleeping in the other bed in that room. The room had a door opening to the outside. The next morning there was snow on top of our bed because the door had been left open all night.

Water was often frozen in the water pail in the kitchen at night. The person who got up first would break the ice in order to fill the teakettle which was placed on the range as soon as the fire was started.

In order to start fires quickly, a bushel of cobs would be provided the night before. As a small boy it was my job to see that this bushel of cobs was brought in, before dark. Sometimes we would shell corn with the hand power sheller. Then we would have clean, dry cobs. Often I had to go out into the pen where we fed the hogs and pick up cobs that were not always dry. The wet cobs would be dried out in the oven of the kitchen range. Before going to bed father would see that at least two cobs were stood on end inside a small can of coal oil to soak until morning.

The person who built the fires, first dumped the ashes from the grates, touched a match to one of the oiled cobs and dropped the blazing cob into the stove. One half bushel of cobs was thrown into the stove. In a few minutes wood or coal was added to the fire. The stove soon became so hot that the drafts were

closed. The house was comfortably warm in about one half hour from the time the fire builder got up. Father was usually the fire builder, but during the last two or three winters I was home, I often built the fires.

As soon as the rooms were warm, mother got up and started preparing breakfast. The older children were called. After they got dressed, near the warm stove, they helped the younger ones to dress.

Our furniture was of a rather non-descript nature. There was always a high chair for the youngest child. Usually there were two good, big rocking chairs, in which father and mother loved to sit and rest after the evening work was done. I think all of us remember, how as small children, we climbed upon father's knee, as he sat in the big rocking chair, and listened to him sing, "Darling Nellie Gray", "Farmers' Boy", "Little Brown Jug", Sweet Alice Ben Bolt", "The Man on The Flying Trapeze", "Alas and Did My Savior Bleed", "At the Cross", and "Sweet Hour of Prayer".

The dining room table was of pine, and so large, that with extension leaves, it could seat twelve people at once. We had a smaller drop-leaf table made of solid black walnut. It was kept in the house for a while. For several years it was used out-of-doors as a place on which to sun and air crocks, pans and pails used in our dairy. I do not know whatever became of that walnut table. I wish I could have it now, in as good a shape as the first time I saw it. I could make a beautiful piece out of it. People of that day did not appreciate the beauty of black walnut furniture. Perhaps it was too easily acquired.

Most of our chairs were of the straight back type. Once father bought some chairs with cane bottoms. As the bottoms of these chairs wore out they were replaced by nailing a thin chair seat over the original bottom.

There was a large wood cupboard in one corner of the kitchen. Most of the dishes were kept there. Among these dishes were some China plates (Ironstone), made in England. When brother Wesley was in England during World War I, he saw the factory still making that brand of chinaware. Some wood shelves were made in another corner of the kitchen for storing pots and pans. Near the kitchen stove was a large wood box. It was my duty to fill this box with wood each night for the next day's burning.

The kitchen floor was bare pine boards. This floor was usually scrubbed three times per week. On cold winter days the scrub water often froze on the floor before it got dry.

In the living room was a large cabinet we called the safe. It had two large doors with tin panels. On each panel was a large star formed by punching holes through the tin. Sister Pearl now has this safe in her Oskaloosa home.

A small walnut piece, called the bureau, always stood on top of the safe. It was a chest of drawers about seventeen inches high, eighteen inches wide, and ten inches deep from front to back, It had five little drawers suitable for holding spools of thread, buttons and other sewing materials. Uncle John Plum, mother's brother, made this piece and gave it to mother before she was married. He must have spent a number of hours building it with nothing but hand tools. I now have this piece in my home. I consider it a valuable keepsake.

Our safe was used for storing linens, and things of that nature. There were no closets built into this house. Two large wood boxes were stored in the bedrooms

to hold quilts, clothing and blankets. Father had a big trunk which was kept locked, because it contained keepsakes and valuable papers.

The only time piece we had in our home for years was an old fashioned, Seth Thomas, weight clock, which had to be wound every day. Father always wound the clock at bedtime. On very rare occasions we might want to get up extra early. The night before father wound the alarm on the clock. It happened a few times that the clock stopped, because it was not wound. Then we would set the clock by guess until the time of day when father could stand in our south kitchen door and watch the sunshine come straight into the door. Then the clock was set at 12 noon.

Watches were pretty expensive in those days. Few farmers owned a watch. When we were working in our fields in the summer, we learned to tell time fairly accurately by watching the position of the sun. One of our neighbors bought a large bell and suspended it on a tall pole in his yard. The ladies of the house rang that dinner bell when it was time to call the men from the fields.

In spite of our house as I have described it, it was a real home. It saw a "Heap O' Livin". During the forty odd years father was there, three people, my mother, my aunt, and my paternal grandmother, all died in this house, within one year's time. Twelve children were born there. None of the children were born in a hospital. For some there was no doctor. A neighbor lady acted as mid-wife.

Today all trace of that house is gone. It was torn down soon after our farm was sold. But in memory I can still see it as it was when I was small. To me it was a real home. Father told me that when he was growing up, his father's family moved so frequently from one rented farm to another there was no place father could remember as his boyhood home.

I am glad father bought the farm and made it possible for me to live there twenty years. That old farm will always be home to me. I cannot drive past it now without feeling I would like to drive up the lane to the old house and spend the night.

FARM BUILDINGS

Our smoke house stood about one rod from our kitchen door. This one story, frame building had no windows and but one door. The floor space was 14 x 16 feet, with dirt floor. Once each year we hung hams, shoulders, and bacon slabs inside this house on poles, several feet above the ground. We let them hang for several days while smoke from a slow burning fire, of green, hickory wood, curled around the meat and gave it a delicious flavor. During the rest of the year this building was used as a storage place for pork barrels, hand tools, nuts of different kinds, and most anything not injured by freezing.

Just back of the smoke house was the cave. In summer the cave was the coolest place for us to keep crocks of fresh milk, cream, buttermilk, cottage cheese and butter. Potatoes, turnips, squash, pumpkins, apples and canned foods were kept there in winter. Once or twice, when storm clouds threatened a tornado, the entire family abandoned the house and went to the cave, for safety, until the dangerous looking clouds had passed.

Something like one hundred yards off to the northeast from the dwelling house, other farm buildings were erected. Father first erected a building of logs which was used at various times as a hog house, and at other times as a stable for a team of horses. There were times when, divided by a board fence, it was used for both purposes at the same time.

Thirty feet east of the first log building was another used as a corn crib, capable of holding one thousand bushels of ear corn. Ten feet east of the corn crib was a frame building where we stored oats. We called it the oats bin.

Between the hog house and the corn crib, father later enclosed part of the space by building a north and a south wall of pine boards. The Plano grain binder, the McCormack mower and the spring wagon were stored in this enclosure. Enough space was left between the mower and the corn crib so we could drive our farm wagon on the west side of the crib, at picking time, and unload corn. At other times this shed space might be used for storing some other farm machine.

Between the corn crib and the oats bin was a shed open on both the north and south sides. At picking time we drove our farm wagon into this shed and shoveled corn into the east side of the crib. This shed also provided shelter for our farm wagon when not in use.

On the east side the oats bin formed one side of a shed that was open on the south side only. The north and east sides of this shed were made of rough boards. This shed was used for storing our walking cultivator and walking stirring plows.

Sometimes this shed was used as shelter for small calves. Our adult cattle always spent the winter out of doors, with shelter in a ravine or around a big straw stack.

The hog house, first shed, corn crib, second shed, oats bin, and third shed were all joined together under one roof. This roof was formed of poles, cut from the timber and used as rafters. The rafters were covered first with brush and second with straw, topped with a thatch of long blue-stem dry grass. Such a roof, when properly made, shed water well.

A little to the north of these buildings was a stable for four horses. This building was constructed by setting long posts in the ground and nailing rough

boards to form the walls. The roof was made of thatch, like the other buildings. Later a hog house was made of lumber with no thatched roof.

During the more than forty years father lived on this farm he never carried any fire insurance. Once or twice agents talked to him about fire insurance. When they found the house had a wood shingle roof and no chimneys, and the other buildings had thatched roofs, they would not issue the policy. The risk from fire was too great. Once or twice the wood shingles on the house roof caught fire. But it happened in the daytime and the fire was soon discovered and put out.

Sister Hazel tells me that one summer day she and Myrtle and Ruth were at home. Father and Earl were working down in the pasture out of sight of the house. The girls built a good fire in the kitchen range, so they could do some cooking or ironing. After a short time they heard a noise. They rushed outside and found the wood shingles of the house were burning. The long farm ladder was usually kept in the shed about one hundred yards from the house. Luck was with the girls that day. The ladder was lying near the house. The girls quickly put the ladder to the roof. Myrtle climbed upon it while the other two grabbed water pails and began carrying water from the water barrel, about two rods away. They worked so fast and so thoroughly that when Father and Earl came in, about one hour later, the fire was completely out. A large patch of shingles had to be replaced on the roof.

Perhaps one reason there were no serious fire losses on this farm was because of the extreme caution father tried to teach all the family. Some of the rules he laid down were: "1. Never start a fire by pouring coal oil into a stove. Soak a cob with coal oil, light it and put it into the stove. You can do this safely. 2. Never leave clothing or other inflammable material near a hot stove. 3. Never carry matches in your pocket unless you are going to use those matches at once. 4. Never build a fire out of doors unless you are sure it will not get beyond control."

Neither father nor I smoked, so we did not need to keep our pockets filled with matches. I had never heard of book matches while I was on the farm. The so-called parlor matches were much more easily ignited. I saw a young man have his vest set on fire because he was carrying matches in his vest pocket while engaged in a friendly boxing bout. Until I was sixteen years old, there were two serious crimes I was warned against committing. "Do not carry matches. Do not stay away from home after nine o'clock at night."

WATER

On a number of early Iowa farms securing plenty of water for the use of the family and livestock was not too much of a problem. All some farmers did was dig or drill a well one hundred feet deep, more or less, install a pump and set up a good windmill. From then on he had an abundance of good water, pumped at very low cost.

Water was much more of a problem on my father's farm. The house was on about the highest elevation of the farm. When father moved into the house he dug a well close by the house. After digging 32 feet through sandstone and slate he found practically no water seeping in from the ground.

He connected eve troughs from one side of the house to the well so it served as a cistern. Rain water is naturally soft, but when it came into contact with the slate in this cistern it soon became hard. We often used this water for drinking, cooking, and washing dishes.

In order to have water for livestock, father decided to dig a big well. He made it five feet in diameter, but when he quit digging, at 60 feet, he still did not have much water.

There was a small ditch that ran within a few feet of this well. In late winter, when the snow started melting, water ran down this ditch. Then father would take fifty feet of one inch rubber hose and use it as a siphon to get water into the well.

First he would build a little dam of snow to make the water in the ditch build up to about two feet in depth. Then, with someone to help him, he would hold both ends of the hose up and fill it by pouring water into one end. One person would place one end of the hose under water in the little pond. The other end of the hose was dropped into the well. The water would start running through the hose in a steady stream and would continue running for hours, so long as there was enough water in the pond to keep the end of the hose covered so air could not get into it. If there happened to be several days of melting snow during the winter, the big well was filled nearly to the top with snow water. We never used this water for the house, but we did use it for livestock.

I used to hear this expression, "That man doesn't know straight up." Later I found very few people know straight up. This applies to carpenters, bricklayers, plumbers, well diggers and many others. When digging the big well, father made the walls perpendicular for 60 feet, but he used a plumb line. Other workers make good use of a level.

Not being satisfied with the water in the cistern, father went about 1/8 mile south of the house and dug another well in a small slough. This well, about 20 feet deep, furnished us good, soft drinking water. Quite a bit of the time we hauled one or two 50 gallon barrels of water from this well each week for use in our laundry.

Almost every day, in the summer months, and often several times a day, some member of the family would take an earthenware, gallon jug and bring cool drinking water from this upper well.

One time father took his team, walking plow and slip scraper and went into the hog pasture. Here, after several days of hard labor, he dug a farm pond by

building a dam across a small ditch. This pond furnished water for our hogs and cattle for several years.

Still we did not have enough water for all purposes. So father went down the hill about one fourth mile from the house. Here, on the creek bottom land, he dug another well about 30 feet deep. He found an abundance of water. I never knew this well to run dry. Father installed a wood, lift pump in this well. Whenever we were short of water in the other wells we could always find plenty of water in this bottom well. At times we hauled water for our laundry from it. We usually watered our horses there. For some years it was my job to keep water pumped into a stock tank at this well so the cattle could drink. When I left home that chore was given to the other children.

After we had the water in the well, we had another problem, how to get it out. The bottom well was the only one that ever had a pump. Father built a curb, or box, 2 to 4 feet high around the opening in the platform that covered the cistern and also the big well. On top of each curbing he built a windlass.

Note: The old Webster's Dictionary, we had in our house, defined a windlass: "A machine for raising weights, consisting of a cylinder or roller of timber, moving on its axis, and turned by a crank--with a rope or chain attached to the weight." As the crank was turned on our well windlass the rope, which was long enough to reach from the windlass to the bottom of the well, was wound up on the roller and that lifted the pail of water.

For the cistern we had an old oaken bucket, like the one in the song by that name. Two or three feet of chain was fastened to the iron bail of the bucket and the rope was attached to the chain. The weight of the chain caused the bucket to sink and fill when lowered into the water. It was easy to get a cool drink quickly on a hot summer day by lowering the old oaken bucket into the water and then winding it up "dripping with coolness".

A much larger bucket was used on the windlass at the big well. It was so big that, when full of water, father was about the only member of the family who could haul it up until I was nearly grown.

The upper well was covered with a tight wood platform and a tight fitting lid, but the only way we ever drew water from that well was by fastening a bucket or jug to the end of a rope and hauling it up hand over hand.

Most of the time during the summer two fifty gallon wood barrels were kept standing under the eve troughs on the south side of the house, to catch rain water. In one good rain we might catch a full barrel of water. If we had two good rains in one week we would not have to haul water for our laundry.

I often noticed wigglers in our rain barrels after the water had stood in them a few days. Later I learned these wigglers were young mosquitoes. We had fewer mosquito bites in the summer if we kept tight lids over the rain barrels.

If a heavy snow came we often set a water barrel inside the kitchen and filled it with clean snow. As this snow melted it gave us extra water. Father always enjoyed drinking cold water. If he could have had ice water every day of the year he would have been happy. So long as there was clean snow on the ground he would have some of the children bring it in so he could prepare cold drinking water. If it had been possible for him to own just one of the modern electrical appliances I am sure he would have chosen a refrigerator. But he never owned one.

One evening father sent me to the upper well to get a jug of water. I filled the jug to the top. Then I put the snugly fitting cork into the neck of the jug and hit it with my hand. To my surprise the jug broke into pieces. I had to go home and tell the jug was broken. I did not understand why the jug broke so easily until years later when I studied Pascal's Law in physics. "When pressure is applied to a liquid in a closed vessel the pressure is carried thru the liquid equally in all directions." For example, if the total inside surface of the jug is 100 sq. inches and the end of the cork equals just one inch, a force of 25 pounds applied to the cork would create a total force on the inside of the jug of, 100 x 25 pounds or 2500 pounds. No wonder the jug broke. I wonder how many farm boys have broken jugs in the same way I did.

THE U. S. MAIL

On February 1, 1902, Rural Free Delivery Route No. 2 was started from Eddyville, Iowa. This route, 24 3/4 miles in length, came past our farm. Frank Marion Epperson was the first carrier and Elbert Manning Epperson was his substitute. Papers, on file in the Eddyville post office today, show the annual salary of the carrier was five hundred dollars, including horse hire.

For several weeks before this route was started, we were informed that each patron of the route must put up an approved, metal mail box on the highway, in front of his house, if he lived on the highway, or at his gate, if he lived in the field, as we did.

We expected the carrier would come past our gate about eleven O'clock in the morning of the first day. Early that morning father and I went to our gate, set a post and mounted our mail box, just a few minutes before the carrier drove up, stopped at the box, and left our first Rural Free Delivery mail.

The coming of the Rural Free Delivery meant a great deal to us and all the families along the route. Now we could mail, and receive, letters every day of the week, except Sunday. We could have a daily newspaper. We could keep in much closer touch with world news.

Records, in the county recorder's office in Oskaloosa, show that father had possession of his farm as early as the year 1879. From that time until the coming of the Rural Free Delivery he could not get mail more often than three days per week.

The mail was carried on a star route from Oskaloosa each Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. One man in our community got a contract to carry mail from the Eveland post office to Oskaloosa and return, on the three days mentioned. He usually drove a team hitched to a covered, spring wagon. He might haul passengers for about 50 cents per round trip.

For some years the Eveland post office was in a little, country store, located at the corner, one half mile west of the Jefferson school house. We had to go one and one half miles for mail. Later John Moore took the Eveland post office to his store, about one mile farther south. This left us two and one half miles from the post office.

Most of the time, on winter days, the mail did not arrive at the post office until after dark. If the weather was bad we might not get to the post office more than once a week. Sometimes the Ross or Pickerell families, our near neighbors, would go to the post office. They would bring our mail. If we went for our mail we would bring theirs. One spring the roads were very muddy for several weeks. During that time I made several trips to the post office with my riding mare to get the mail for the three families.

One summer day, when I was quite small, I got on the back of Old Doll and started to the post office. When I was about half way there, the mare started trotting rather lively and I bounced around so I soon fell off. As I did not have a saddle I was not able to climb back onto my mount. I tried to get her down into the ditch, at the side of the road, so I could jump on but she was afraid of the ditch. I started walking down the road leading the mare. One of our neighbors came along with his spring wagon. He asked me why I did not ride. I told him I could not get onto the horse. He asked why I got off. Shamefacedly, I told him I fell off. He stopped his team and let me climb into the back end of his wagon. From there I got onto my mare.

In September, 1901, I started to ride to the post office. As I went past Mister Ross's house he called and said, "Did you hear that President McKinley has been murdered?" I told him we had not heard it. The newspapers, I got that day, told how the president had made a speech in Buffalo, New York. They also told how the next day he was shot while shaking hands with a man who appeared to have a bandaged hand.

Whenever we were able to get newspapers we read the latest reports of the president's condition. About one week later we read of his death. Today such news would come to us in a few minutes by radio or television. When Franklin D. Roosevelt died we heard it within the hour.

HARVESTING AND THRESHING GRAIN

A few months ago I drove past a field where a self propelled combine was cutting and threshing oats all in one operation. With this machine and an extra tractor, two men were doing work that in my boyhood days would have required a dozen men. In those times a number of days had to elapse between the time of cutting and threshing.

The grain was cut with a binder, pulled by three or four horses. As the grain was cut it was elevated through the machine and dropped off as bundles tied with binder twine. Our Plano binder dropped the bundles one at a time. Two or three children placed these bundles in piles so father could set them into shocks after he got the cutting done. The newer binders had a bundle carrier attachment by which the driver of the machine dumped the bundles into piles. Ten or twelve bundles were set upright to make a shock. A cap sheaf was placed over the top to keep the rain from running into the shock. A field of shocked grain always made a pretty picture.

A number of our neighbors started threshing within a week or two after the grain was cut. Six teams and wagons, with hayracks, were needed to haul the bundles from the shocks to the machine. In our part of the state two men were assigned to each wagon. One pitched the bundles onto the wagon, the other rode on the wagon, drove the team, and built up the load. When the load was finished the driver drove to the machine and awaited his turn to pitch the bundles to the separator. The other man remained in the field and went to help another driver get his load. In the northern part of Iowa farmers built box hayracks. With these one man pitched the bundles onto the wagon and built up his load without the help of another man.

There were not enough threshing machines in our locality so that all the grain could be threshed in a few days. The threshing period might extend over several weeks. If the season were rainy, shocked grain might be badly damaged before it could be threshed. Father always hauled his shocks of grain from the field and built tall, round pointed, stacks. Grain could stand in his stacks for months without spoiling, regardless of weather.

I have seen many changes in threshing machines during my lifetime. My earliest recollection is of two or three teams of horses pulling low wheeled wagons and the grain separator into our stack yard. Men took the wheels off one wagon and lowered it to the ground. They drove stakes into the ground to anchor it so it could not move. They attached five long wood sweeps to it an assembled a horsepower. A long steel tumbling rod was laid on the ground connecting the power with the grain separator. A circular wood platform was laid on top the gear wheels of the power. Doubletrees were attached to the ends of each of the five sweeps and five pairs of horses were hitched to them. When the machine was set, and the neighbors had assembled to help, a man took a long whip in his hand and climbed upon the platform of the power. He cracked his whip and yelled "Getup". The horses moved around and around in a circle. The gear wheels of the power turned and set the tumbling rod to rolling over and over transmitting power to turn the moving parts of the grain separator.

Three men stood at the front end of the separator. The one directly in front, called the feeder, took the bundles of grain and fed them into the cylinder of the machine after the bandcutter, standing on either side of him had cut the twine that held the bundle together.

On one side of the separator was a spout near the ground from which the threshed grain poured out. A wood box, big enough to hold two, round, wood half bushel measures was placed on the ground under this spout. A man placed one measure under the spout. When this measure was full he stroked it across the top with a short, straight edge board to make an exact half bushel. He then dragged the measure past a metal lever on one side of the box. This lever tripped a tally which counted the number of measures of grain threshed on each job. The measures were lifted and dumped into a grain wagon. While one measure was filling the other was tallied and dumped. On the rear end of the separator was a long wood straw carrier. This carrier extended straight out from the separator. Straw was carried on a moving web from the machine to the end of the stacker. Three or four men were required to build a straw stack. The one who worked next to the straw carrier and pushed the straw back with a pitchfork had to breath a lot of dust and dirt.

The latest grain separators were made with a band cutting and self feeding attachment. With this device the bundles of grain were pitched onto a moving web. The self feeder cut the bands and fed the straw into the machine. A weigher and elevator attachment weighed the grain and dumped it directly into a grain wagon. The new type straw stacker was a long metal pipe, eight or ten inches in diameter. A blast of air blew the straw through this pipe and dropped it straight down onto the stack. This stacker could swing in an arc of a circle. The straw stack could be built on that arc. The last time I helped on a threshing job, some time in the nineteen thirties, I built the entire straw stack by myself.

I remember only one time that we threshed with a horse power outfit. I think that machine was owned and operated by Tom Boles and his brother Ed. My sisters and I thoroughly enjoyed running barefoot in the deep dust stirred up by the horses on the power after the machine left the farm. All other times we threshed while I was at home, power was supplied by a steam tractor. As a small boy I got almost as much thrill seeing the tractor come puffing up the road to our farm as I would to see an elephant at a circus. The tractor and separator were owned and operated by the Mather brothers and Martin Visser. Len Visser or Ben Mather was usually the engineer. When about ten years old I thought that if I ever got big enough, wise enough and brave enough to run a steam tractor like these men did, I would be some man.

On the road the tractor pulled the grain separator. Behind the separator a farm team plodded along pulling a wood water tank. One man had to be responsible for keeping enough water hauled to supply the boiler of the steam tractor.

If the machine came to our house late in the afternoon, the outfit was left standing a few feet from our grain stacks until the next morning. The engineer and his helper would sleep at our house. The other men who worked with the machine would go home.

About four o'clock in the morning the engineer and helper would get up and go to the engine. They would clean out the firebox and build a new fire. By six o'clock they would have steam up in the boiler and they would come to the house for breakfast. Before seven o'clock they would be back at the engine and the engineer would blow the engine whistle to let our neighbors know that Motts were ready to thresh and needed help.

As we threshed from stacks the separator would be pulled between two stacks so that the wind would blow on the front of the separator. It was a very dusty job when the wind blew from the other direction. We did not need any hayracks, but we did need four men to pitch the bundles from the stacks to the separator. One

morning, soon after we started threshing, the engineer noticed sparks from the engine had set one of our grain stacks on fire. He quickly called for help. The water tank was rolled near the stack and water pumped onto the fire quickly extinguished it. Had the fire got a good start we would have lost all our grain and the separator would have been destroyed.

Before the nineteen thirties the steam tractors had generally been replaced with gasoline or oil burning tractors. The engineer did not have to spend two or three hours each morning getting the modern tractor ready to work.

In order to get the number of men required to do a threshing job, neighbors traded work. When in my teens, father and I both helped our neighbors. By the time the machine came to our place we had earned enough labor credits from our neighbors so we had already paid for most of our help.

Anyone who lived on a farm before the days of the combine cannot forget the dinners we used to eat on threshing days. The housewife would start preparing dinner early in the morning. Often one or more neighbor ladies would come to help. When the machine stopped for noon the men ran foot races to see who could be first to get washed and ready to eat. Soap, water and towels and several wash-pans had been provided for the use of the men under the shade trees in the door yard.

Soon the men were told, "Dinner is ready". A large table, capable of seating ten or twelve men would be set in the dining room and loaded down with roast pork, roast beef, or chicken as the meat course. Great big dishes of mashed potatoes, gravy, bread, butter, garden vegetables, were quickly passed from one hungry man to another, and as quickly emptied. One of the ladies stood by ready to refill each empty dish. A man could expect to top off the dinner with pie, cake or some nice fruit. Every man had a keen appetite and thoroughly enjoyed his dinner. Some of the farm wives tried to outdo each other in setting the best table. What would I not give to have a threshing man's appetite again and a chance to sit at a real thresher's table.

HORSES

Before the days of the gasoline or oil burning tractor, horses occupied a very important place on the Iowa farms. They furnished motive power for all our farm implements. Hitched to farm wagons they hauled all our farm produce to market. When hitched to top buggies or spring wagons, they took us to church, to town for shopping, or down to the Des Moines river for a summer picnic. They also took us to the Fourth of July celebrations, or to a visit with relatives. Under the saddle they carried us on many rides both for business and pleasure.

Father seemed to have as much love for all his good horses as any cowboy had for Old Paint. He always treated them kindly and took good care of them.

During the winter months one two-horse team was usually kept in the barn. All the other horses were turned out to run in the pasture and corn stalk fields. The horses in the pasture developed long, shaggy coats of hair, so they could stand the weather very easily, so long as they could get hay, or straw and water.

The team, kept in the barn, was used nearly every day for hauling feed, water or fuel, or for making trips off the farm. When heavy snow came, or the fields got slick with ice, it was necessary to have this team rough shod. The team was taken to the local blacksmith shop and steel shoes with sharp calks were nailed to the horse's feet.

Rough shod, the horses could walk up steep, icy hills and pull heavy loads, but the sharp shoes made it dangerous to turn the horses loose in the pasture together or with other livestock. Often when running loose, horses will kick at each other just in pure fun. A horse kicked with a sharp shoe could be severely injured.

There might be two or three days of bad weather when the horses would not be taken from the barn to do any work. They got pretty restless standing so long without exercise. Then they seemed to enjoy having us take them out, jump onto their backs, and allow them to take a brisk run over the fields. Sometimes on these runs they would make such quick turns that if we were not good riders we would find ourselves rolling on the ground.

The team, kept in the barn, was well fed and cared for so when spring work started they were in good condition. Two or three weeks before time to start field work in the spring, we brought the horses in from the pasture each night. We fed them well and brushed and curried them well each morning. In this way we got them conditioned for the hard work ahead.

The first team of horses I remember was a pair of geldings, named Jack and Bill. Father had this team for several years. Jack was black or dark bay in color with a white star in his forehead. Bill was almost a solid bay. When these horses got too old for profitable work, they were retired to pasture and kept as long as they lived, because they had been such faithful workers.

When I was little more than four years old I began to understand some of the danger of working with horses. One day father took me in his farm wagon and drove the team to the corn field. He left me standing in the front end of the wagon box while he picked ears of corn from the stalks near the wagon. About once each minute he would speak to the horses and they would walk a few feet down the row and stop while he picked the corn. I think I must have got hold of a corn stalk and struck the horses with it. For once the horses started so suddenly that I fell out over the end of the wagon box and landed on the ground just behind the horse's feet.

When father realized I was not in the wagon he was frightened. He saw me lying on the ground behind the wagon. He hurried to pick me up and was greatly relieved to find I was not seriously hurt. There was only one little mark on one of my hands where the wagon wheel had touched it in the soft dirt. Father tied his team to the fence and taking me in his big, strong arms carried me about one fourth mile to the house. Here I was put to bed. I went to sleep and when I awoke my two sisters were just coming home from school. I was able to tell them about my adventure.

Our next horses were a team of young grey mares, named Doll and Kit. They were probably bought at some farm sale. Doll was a pretty faithful worker for many years. Kit was a very good worker but very nervous. If the wind blew a piece of paper near her she became frightened and tried to run away. Father watched her carefully and did not have a serious accident with her.

One day he was driving this team across the bridge on the Des Moines river. Perhaps Kit saw the water moving under the bridge, through the cracks in the bridge floor. She gave a quick spring into the air and came down with one hind foot over the tongue of the spring wagon. Then she tried to run away. Father held the lines tight and managed to get the horses turned cross wise of the bridge floor. Here he held the horses until someone came up behind him and helped him get the horses unhitched and put back into proper position. He then drove on to Oskaloosa and back without further adventure.

We had Kit only a few years when we turned her out to pasture one morning. That evening we found her standing beside a barbed wire fence with one foot over the wire. She had pawed into the fence and caught her foot so she could not lift it off the wire. Instead she kept moving it back and forth along the barbes cutting the flesh deeper with every motion.

The foot was so badly injured we could not get it to heal. There seemed no chance that she would ever recover. One day, after several months of waiting, father called a neighbor to come with a rifle and put a bullet through her head.

Doll had two mare colts. One called Colie was black, the other, named Fanny was grey. When Colie was about four years old we tried to work her in the fields. She proved to be so balky that we gave up trying to work her. Fanny was only three years old, but when father hitched her up she worked beautifully and never gave any trouble.

Father traded Colie for a span of mules, less than one year old, and in the deal he also got a good western type saddle.

For several years Fanny was my saddle horse. I certainly enjoyed riding her. Sam Stroud, mother's brother, spent four years as an enlisted man in the U. S. Cavalry. Shortly after his discharge he visited us. One day he took two of our mares and showed us how he rode the Roman race and performed in the monkey drill. I began to practice with Fanny. Soon I could stand on the ground, take the rein and her mane in my left hand, speak to Fanny, and as she started on a swift gallop, I could swing onto her back. Or if I wished I could swing clear over her until my feet touched the ground on the other side, then give a spring and come back onto her back. The young mare seemed to enjoy that exercise as much as I did. I believe Fanny raised a mare colt we called Nellie.

It was the spring after I was fourteen that father decided I was old enough to be a full farm hand. He bought two old bay mares. We called them Kate and Brownie. When father started planting corn that spring, he started me cultivating

the rows by following the planter wheel marks, with a walking cultivator, before the corn had sprouted. Sometimes I had a little trouble making the mares walk together. For several nights I dreamed I was working in the fields and I was plowing out all the corn. I would call the names of Brownie or Kate so loudly I would waken the other members of the family.

I did a lot of work with this team but they were somewhat of a disappointment. Some of the time Kate was inclined to be balky. Brownie developed heaves. I had to be careful to wet the oats and dry hay, fed to Brownie, else the next morning she might have heaves so badly, she could not work for two or three hours.

One fall Bertha and I rode these mares to church several times. I rode Kate with the western saddle. Bertha rode Brownie using mother's old sidesaddle. After a few years Kate died. We sold Brownie for a buggy horse. At that time Brownie had a small colt, called Pet. We tried to raise him on cow's milk but he did not grow properly and father sold him soon after he was old enough to work. When I left the farm I believe father still had Doll, Fanny, and Nellie. He may have had one or two other horses at that time.

My experience with mules on the farm was rather limited. When the mules we had traded for were three years old, a man asked father to put a price on them. He did so and the man bought them. After I left the farm, father raised another span of mules. Ziba and Wesley helped break them to work. One day Wesley walked behind one of the mules that was standing tied in the barn. The mule promptly kicked the cap off Wesley's head. A year or so before I was married I went home for a few days visit. Sister Pearl was home. I hitched the mules to the top buggy and Pearl and I started to drive to Sunday School at Bethel Church. We had driven from our house to the highway and started up the first hill when we met a motorcycle rider coming toward us.

Before I knew what was happening those mules had whirled completely around and started down the road. The only reason the buggy was not tipped over was that one of the iron braces on the side of the buggy tongue was badly bent.

I managed to drive the mules back inside our pasture. Here I unhitched them from the buggy and started to drive them back to the house as I walked behind them. They began to run so I had to let them go. When I got to the gate, near the house, one mule was on the near side of the gate, the other had jumped over it. The last time I had anything to do with those mules was when we went home for a few days on our honeymoon. The war was on. Fred had just enlisted. The corn needed cultivating. Father was hardly able to do field work. I drove those mules two or three days cultivating corn. That was the last time I ever did any work on the old farm.

One day, in late winter, father and mother went to Oskaloosa with the spring wagon. We children were left at home. We expected the folks back about dark, but darkness came and there was no sign of them. My sisters cooked supper. We ate supper and kept wondering why the folks were not home. About eight o'clock they came in. They explained that shortly after they left Oskaloosa the fog got so thick they could not see the grey horses in front of them. They could not see the road. The only thing they could do was hold the lines loosely and let the horses take them home through the intense darkness. Frequently we heard of some man who would go to town and drink too much hard liquor, so he was not able to drive home. If the man could get his team hitched up and started home, the horses would take him home without a driver. This is something the modern automobile cannot do.

GROWING AND HARVESTING CORN

If we had not selected our seed corn from the field, early in the fall, we would go to the corn crib a few days before planting time and pick out good looking ears. We would plant a few kernels from these ears in a warm spot. A few days later we would count the number of kernels that had sprouted. If these kernels grew well, we would pick all our seed from the crib.

Two or three weeks after planting we would check the field to see how many hills of corn were missing. Sometimes the seed was not too strong. Sometimes squirrels and crows would dig up quite a little corn.

Several different years father sent me to the field with a hand corn planter to drop new corn in the missing hills. This later planted corn was always much slower maturing than the regular planted corn. It might produce some fodder, but often it did not produce much grain.

Very few farmers, today, try to select their own seed corn. Most of them buy hybrid seed from a commercial seed company. When I was a boy we thought we had a pretty good crop of corn if it yielded fifty bushels per acre. One year we planted corn on a small field on our creek bottom land. We harvested ninety bushels per acre from that field. Most years that field was too wet to grow good corn. That year the rains came just right, so we harvested the big crop.

As soon as the corn was a few inches high we began cultivating it with our walking cultivators. If the weather permitted us to work steady we were able to keep ahead of the weeds. A few rainy days could make the weeds grow so rapidly it was impossible to have clean fields.

Before I was old enough to drive a team to the cultivator the morning-glory vines sometimes grew so thick there was danger of them choking and killing hills of corn. Father would plow through the field with the cultivator, and then have one of my older sisters and I follow him and pull all the vines we saw clinging to the hills of corn.

When September came, unless we had an abundance of hay for cattle feed, we would start cutting corn fodder. By that time the ears of corn had started to dent, and the leaves were starting to dry. Some farmers counted off twelve hills of corn in one direction, and twelve hills at right angles to the first, thus making a square of one hundred and forty-four hills. Some only counted off ten hills square, or a total of 100 hills.

In the center of the square the tops of four hills of corn would be tied together. Then the farmer would take his long bladed corn knife, and cut down as many stalks of corn as he could easily carry at one time. These stalks would be placed against the stalks that had been tied together.

When all the stalks in the square were cut and leaned together they make a good sized shock of fodder. Father wanted his shocks so he could easily pull them over onto a drag for feeding to the cattle in winter time. Instead of tying stalks together to start his shock, he made a wood horse by nailing two boards, about thirty inches long to one end of a long, slender pole. The other end of the pole rested on the ground to form a three legged horse. About three feet back from the end of the pole where the boards were nailed, a hole was bored through the pole. An endgate rod, from the wagon was placed through this hole. This outfit furnished four corners for leaning stalks against, when starting the corn shock. When the shock was well started, the rod was pulled out and the horse removed from the inside

of the shock. The shock was completed by placing the remaining stalks of that square in such positions as to make the shock round. A rope was placed around the top of the shock and drawn tight. Then the top of the shock was tied tight with binder twine. These shocks stood up well, but were fairly easily upset onto the drag at feeding time.

Most of the time we went to the field in the winter and picked the ears of corn from the fodder before we fed it to the cattle. Otherwise, the cattle would get too much corn. It was a slow, tedious job, shucking corn from corn fodder.

In those long ago days, harvesting the main corn crop was a big job. If a farmer had hogs to feed, he often began picking some corn early in September or October. This corn was high in moisture content and had to be fed up in a few days.

Before bushels of corn could be piled up in a crib, the ears must hang on the stalks until they were fairly dry. If the corn were put into the crib too wet, it would rot or mold. Most of the time the farmer did not begin the main corn harvest until the last of October or the first of November.

Some well-to-do farmers hired young men to pick corn for them. These men were paid from one to three cents per bushel for each bushel put into the crib. In addition, the corn picker usually got board and room at the farmer's house.

Every experienced corn picker knew that if he wanted to pick many bushels of corn in one day, he must start early in the morning. He got out of bed an hour or more before daylight. He took a coal oil lantern and went to the barn. Here he fed, curried and harnessed his two horses. Next he returned to the house where he ate a big breakfast. As soon as it was light enough for him to see the stalks of corn, he was in the field with his team and wagon.

A few exceptionally good pickers picked one hundred bushels of corn and shoveled it by hand into the crib within a ten-hour day. Most pickers did well to crib seventy-five or eighty bushels per day.

Corn picking was very rough on hands. Most pickers wore cotton mittens or gloves. Father thought he could not pick so fast with mittens as he could with bare hands. By the end of the corn harvest his hands would often be raw and bleeding from large cracks in the skin.

Before corn picking machines became common, some farm magazines sponsored corn picking contests. In these contests each picker was assigned a team and wagon and a certain number of rows of corn from which to pick. The person who put the most corn into his wagon within a certain period, usually about ninety minutes, was declared winner, provided he did not leave too many ears in the field where he picked, and provided he did not have too many husks clinging to the ears he threw into the wagon. These state corn picking contests used to draw great crowds of spectators.

FARM MACHINES

In the eighteen seventies and eighties very few farmers had much money invested in farm machinery. Then it was comparatively easy for a strong, young man to start farming for himself. He could work as a hired man for some other farmer for a few years. If he saved his money he could go to some sale, where a farmer was selling out at auction, and buy a walking plow, harrow, cultivator, and farm wagon.

With these he was able to start farming, after he had secured a team of horses and harness. He could rent a piece of land by agreeing to give from two-fifths to one-half of the crop as rent. If he needed a corn planter or other machine he could usually rent one from some other farmer.

Before I was old enough to work as a field hand, father had only a few machines, a walking stirring plow, a walking cultivator, a wood frame harrow with iron teeth, a McCormack mowing machine, a Plano binder and a wood hay rake.

The hay rake had long, wood teeth put through a light piece of timber, six inches square by ten feet long. The teeth, approximately four feet long, extended through the square timber at right angles to it, and spaced so they extended an equal distance on each side of it. One horse was hitched to this rake. As it slid along the ground, a man walked behind it. When the rake was full of hay the man raised the handles, which extended upwards from the center of the rake, and dumped the hay by causing the rake to flip over.

Father also had a farm wagon with wood wheels. In dry weather we sometimes had to take these wheels to the local blacksmith shop to have the steel tires set tight so they would not fall off and cause the wheels to break down. This wagon could be topped with either the standard wagon box, or the hay rack. The box and the rack could be interchanged according to the load we wished to haul.

For hauling small loads of hay, or fodder, about the farm, we used what we called a drag, or slide. The slide was made of one-inch boards, six inches wide and fourteen feet long. They were nailed together with cross boards so as to make a platform eight feet wide and fourteen feet long. The doubletree was fastened to the front of this slide by a log chain. When the horses were hitched to it the slide was dragged over the ground. The load was usually less than one ton in weight.

We also had a bob-sled with cast iron runners. When there was snow on the ground we often put the wagon box on this sled and drove to Oskaloosa, or other towns, to do shopping or haul freight. We often used the sled for hauling grain or wood.

All grain had to be loaded with a scoopshovel; all hay with a pitchfork. The only way we had for hauling barnyard manure was to pitch it onto a wagon box with a pitchfork or shovel, and then drive the wagon to the fields where the manure was unloaded with the fork or shovel.

One machine that was very important to us was the grindstone. I spent many hours, of my first twenty years, turning the crank of the grindstone while father sharpened scissors, butcher knives, pocket knives, scythes, mower sickles, axes, chisles, or any other edged tools. It was not too tiring to grind small tools, but it sometimes got pretty tiresome before we had ground an entire mower sickle.

When I was nine or ten father took me to the fields with him. When he hitched a horse to the hay rake he put me on the horse to guide it so he would

not have to guide it with lines. He fastened an iron seat, from some old farm machine, onto the frame of the walking cultivator. He had me ride in that seat and drive the team while he cultivated the rows of corn. In this way I learned quite a bit about driving horses before I was big enough to handle the cultivator and stirring plow by myself.

In the spring after I was twelve, I was kept from school a few days to help put in the oats crop. After father had walked across the corn stalk field, seeding the oats seed by hand, I started driving the team and walking cultivator down the corn stalk row, stirring up the ground to cover the oats seed. Father never had a disc harrow until after I left the farm.

The spring after I was fourteen, father bought another team of horses. He bought a new set of harness, a new walking plow, a cultivator, and a new steel harrow. From that time until I left the farm, I worked as a full farm hand during crop time. Father and I each had a fourteen inch walking plow. If both of us worked a ten hour day we might have five acres of ground plowed by nightfall. I soon got accustomed to walking behind the plow and did not mind it too much, although I often walked more than twelve miles a day. It was much harder to walk all day behind the harrow. The ground was very soft and I did not have any plow handles to lean on.

AMUSEMENTS AND PLAY

How could a boy ever have fun on a one hundred and twenty acre farm? We were seven miles from the nearest town. I had very few toys, bought from the stores. During the summer vacation I might not see a neighbor boy for a week or more. What could I do for fun? A child in such a position usually learns to make his own amusement. Sister Mabel was four years older than I. Bertha was two years older. Nora was nearly five years younger. Often my older sisters had work to do around the house. I was left to play alone.

Naturally, my play was an imitation of what I saw my father do. He had horses. I had horses. He plowed his fields with a stirring plow. I plowed my fields. He hauled hay. I hauled hay. He hauled wagon loads of sand and dirt. So did I.

It made no difference that my horses were sticks which I picked up here and there. My stable was made by laying a few sticks on the ground in the desired shape. My hay was a little dried grass which I could always find in dry weather. I rode my horses at a furious gallop. I hitched them to my drag which I made by nailing a wood box onto an old board I found lying around the yard. The work I did with these horses and in caring for them was real work.

In order to plow my fields, I took a lid from a tin can and bent it into the shape of a stirring plow. With this plow I turned the furrows on a small plot of ground as industriously as did my father on his broad acres. I hauled sand and dirt by loading it onto my express wagon, or homemade drag. Then I became the horse to pull the load.

After I started to school I heard of George Washington, the scout and general. I also heard of Daniel Boone. So at home I became a scout and soldier. In order to be a scout I must have a gun. I was never too handy with tools but I begged father until he took a pine board and sawed it into the shape of a rifle. He also made me a wooden sword from a broom handle. With the help of some neighbor boys I learned to whittle out something that looked somewhat like a revolver. With my rifle, sword and revolver I was prepared for any danger. When one or two neighbor boys came to see me we had a noisy time being scouts and Indians.

At other times I built small sail boats and sailed them across the farm pond. I imagined I was on my boat crossing the great Atlantic Ocean. In my history book I read about the battle between the two first iron-clad ships, the Monitor and the Merrimac. I built a boat to look like a "Cheese box on a raft". That was the title given the Monitor, by the southern people.

One time I was given a pair of ice skates for Christmas. They were the kind that clamp onto the sole of the boot or shoe. I had many hours of fun skating with them on our farm pond or on the creek that ran through one corner of our farm.

There is a long hill on the K road that runs on the west side of our farm. Before the days of the automobile that hill was a fine place to coast. Most any evening in winter, when there was enough snow, there might be as many as fifteen or twenty boys and girls, from six to forty out coasting.

John Pickerell made a coaster bob by fastening two strong hand sleds together with a long plank, fastened on top of them in such a way that the front sled could be turned to guide the coaster. The Miller brothers made another coaster. Each coaster could carry from seven to ten people. Some nights we had bright moonlight.

Other nights it was so dark we carried lighted coal oil lanterns on the sleds so we could see where to go.

Dan and Jessie Richards lived in the house beside the coasting hill. One night they invited all the boys and girls into their house to help make and pull sorghum molasses taffy.

No boy should have to grow up on a farm without having a good jackknife. I was rather small when father got my first knife. I soon lost it. I suppose it fell out of my pocket when I was tumbling around. After I lost one or two more, father bought me a knife that had a long chain attached to it so I could fasten it to my clothes. I was able to keep that knife for quite a while.

Every spring, when the leaves came out on the willows, I had to have some whistles made. At first father made a few for me. Then I learned to make my own. I pity the boy who has never made or blown a willow whistle.

Often I went to the woods to find a clump of elder bushes. I cut one of the elder stems, which are always filled with soft pith. Such stems have joints, ten to twelve inches in length. I cut one of these joints. Then I looked around for some dogwood. I cut a stick of dogwood and formed a ramrod for the pop gun I had in mind. I made the pop gun, by first punching out the soft pith from the elder stem. The ramrod was made by whittling the dogwood stem just the right size to go through the hollow elder stem easily. The small part of the ramrod was made about one inch shorter than the elder tube.

When the pop gun was complete I would take some old newspaper and soak it in water or chew it until it was moist. Then I would push it into the elder tube with the ramrod. I stuffed another wad of wet paper into the other end of the hollow tube. As I pushed the second wad into the tube the air between the two wads of paper became compressed and forced the first paper wad out with a loud pop. I had lots of fun with these pop guns, which cost me nothing but a little work to make. I could always find the materials for making them on our farm.

In the fall of the year I was very much fascinated by the steam engine tractors which were used at that time for threshing grain. When I started home from school, on a September afternoon, I often stopped at a willow tree, a short distance from the school house. I cut a limber willow switch. I removed a few of the leaves but left enough to form a heavy brush of leaves near the small end of the switch. Then I took the switch in my hand and walked down the road, swinging it up and down swiftly as I walked. The Swish-shū', Swish-shū,' Swish-shu! sound made by the leaves on the end of the switch reminded me of the puffing steam engine. I imagined I was a steam engineer.

The autumn months brought more fun for it was the time to harvest nuts. I liked to take a cloth sack and walk to a hazelnut thicket where I would fill my sack with nuts, still inside the husks. I would spread them out to dry for a few days before I husked them and stored them to be eaten later.

We had several shell-bark hickory trees growing in our hog pasture. If we let the nuts get ripe enough to fall the hogs would eat them. Bertha and I would go out as soon as we could knock the nuts from the tree by jarring the tree trunk with a maul. Then we would pick up the nuts and carry them home.

A number of large black walnut trees grew on our creek bottom land. One fall father took the farm wagon and we helped him fill the fourteen inch deep wagon box

with walnuts. There were so many nuts left that we went back and picked up another load.

We enjoyed cracking these different nuts. We ate them out of the shell. We used them in making candy and cakes. I understand father sold the walnut trees for lumber before he moved from the farm.

Often, in the spring when earthworms were easily found, I dug a few worms and went down to the creek where I cut a long, light weight pole. I attached a line with hook, sinker, and cork to the pole. I baited the hook and watched with delight as some bullhead pulled the cork under the surface of the water. Those bullheads were fun to catch. They were also good eating. I have never been much of a fisherman, but I still like to throw in a hook where bullheads are biting.

Several different times I made my own kites and flew them in the strong March winds. One day I sent my kite up quite high. The wind blew strongly all day. That night it continued to blow so hard that the kite flew all night.

One spring when the snow was melting there was a steady stream of water flowing down a ditch not far from our house. I erected a small water wheel, made from a tin can, at a small waterfall in this ditch. My wheel worked beautifully.

One spring we were attending school at the Fairview school north of our farm. One fine May afternoon, our teacher led the entire school to the woods, about one-half mile from the school house. Here we were invited to pick all the wild flowers we cared to pick. We soon had our hands filled with bluebells, Dutchman's breetches, columbine, mayflower, bloodroot, buttercups and others. Flowers were growing in great profusion all over that wooded pasture.

We used to have fun, at school in the fall, chasing butterflies during the noon and recess periods. We played blackman, dare base, wood tick, and one old cat, when the ground was dry. When snow came, we played fox and geese, or we rolled big snowballs together to make forts. When we got two forts built we had a snow battle, with small snowballs for ammunition. We sometimes coasted on the schoolhouse hill with our hand sleds.

Father used to say, "One boy is a boy. Two boys are one half a boy and three boys are no boy at all." So long as I played by myself I seldom got into mischief. When one or two neighbor boys came to see me we sometimes did things that did not meet father's approval. One day Charlie Stroud came over. We went down to the house on the road, where Dan Richards once lived. At that time two bachelor brothers lived there. There was no one at home so we looked around the yard. We found two loaded paper shot gun shells. Charlie thought it would be fun to explode one of them. He held the shell pointed downward in his left hand and at the same time held the point of my jackknife blade against the brass shell butt. He struck the end of the jackknife with a rock two or three times, but the shell did not explode. About that instant Charlie's little, yellow dog came up and sat down right where the shell was pointing. Charlie yelled, "Watch! You darned fool! If that had gone off you would have got it." I have thought several times since then, "If it had gone off, perhaps, all three of us would have got it." A shot gun shell, when fired in a gun, usually shoots straight out the end of the shell. Outside the gun, such a shell, exploded, would shoot in all directions. When we tore the shell open we found the powder was wet. Lucky for us.

Another day two boys came to visit me. We played Scouts and Indians. In our excitement we climbed up and slid down the side of the straw stack. I knew father

had forbidden me to climb over the tops of the hay and straw stacks. It might cause rain to enter the stack and spoil its contents. I was having so much fun I completely forgot, or ignored, father's instructions. I quickly climbed on top of the stack and slid down. My body turned, as I slid, so I fell on my side and struck a pile of frozen cow dung. The breath was knocked out of me and I thought I had a broken rib. The boys helped me get to the house. When father heard what I had done, he gave me little sympathy. The next day I decided I did not have a broken rib.

There used to be a steep bluff on the creek bank in our neighbor's pasture. One day Charlie Stroud was with me and he dared me to climb with him up the side of this bluff. The wall was almost perpendicular. If I had lost my footing I might have fallen twelve or fifteen feet. I managed to get to the top but I was trembling all over. I have never tried any mountain climbing since that day.

Sometimes I had an iron tire from an old buggy wheel. I could take a small stick in one hand and roll this tire for long distances at a time, as I ran beside it.

Father usually had a long half inch rope we could use as a lasso. We often tied the rope to a tree trunk, and while one of us swung it from the other end, another one would see how many times he could jump it before he missed.

Our sixteen foot ladder was kept in the shed where we stored the mowing machine. The ladder extended from one eve pole of the shed to the other, about seven feet off the ground, and parallel with it. It was fun, and good exercise, to hang underneath this ladder and walk, hand over hand, from one rung to the next, the full length of the ladder. In various ways we arranged to have a teeter-totter.

Inside the house, on winter evenings we could read a good book, such as Gulliver's Travels, or Elsie Dinsmore, borrowed from our school library. We got the Youth's Companion magazine each week and always took time to read it. We might pop corn, crack nuts, or play checkers, dominoes, nine-men-morris, or authors.

Often, on a summer day, it was pure delight just to wander through the fields, and woods, smell the new mown hay and observe the rabbits, squirrels, and birds. I soon learned to recognize most of the common birds. Early on a summer morning, I often heard a bird that said,

"O Bob White, Is your wheat ripe?
No not quite, then all right."

How could I have any fun? I believe I had more, good, clean fun than many boys of today whose parents have bought them several hundred dollars worth of toys.

THE RAILROAD AND THE COAL MINES

In the late 1890's the Consolidated Coal company representatives began visiting land owners in Monroe County, getting options to buy the coal underlying the land. First, they drilled a few holes on each farm to determine the extent and quality of the coal. They soon bought up a large coal field, at the rate of twenty-five to fifty dollars per acre. The farmer was allowed to keep and farm the surface.

In order to get the coal to market a railroad was constructed from Belle Plaine, Iowa to a few miles south of the big coal camp in Monroe County, known as Buxton. The town was so named in honor of Mister Buxton, an officer of the Consolidated Coal company.

The track was laid in sight of our farm, about one-half mile from our north line fence. I was about twelve when the grading was done.

When the grading crew was working near our place, father got a job for a few days, dumping two wheel scrapers. He went over to see the boss and thought he might get work with his team. When he saw how hard the horses had to work, climbing up and down grades, pulling heavy loads he decided he did not want to abuse his team in that way. He turned the horses out to pasture and took the hand job at less wages.

All the grading was done using horses, mules and human muscles for power. At that time no one had heard of bulldozers, Le Tourneau Pulls, carryalls, and other diesel powered machines, commonly seen on dirt moving jobs today.

It was quite a sight for a country boy to watch the graders at work. Every man was busy. Some were operating a big walking plow, pulled by four horses, plowing the dirt so it could be loaded by the slip scrapers or the big two wheelers. One team was used to haul the wheeler after it was loaded. To fill it, an extra team, called the snap team, was hitched to the end of the wheeler tongue, and taken off as soon as the load was finished.

The clank of the scrapers, the shouts and curses of the different drivers, and the steady movement of the straining horses and mules, were sounds and sights not easily forgotten. Meanwhile, the grade was made a little longer than it was the day before.

The grading gang was closely followed by the track layers. In a few months from the time the graders first appeared near our home the steam locomotives were running up and down the track, hauling freight. For several years a passenger train made the round trip from Belle Plaine to Buxton each day. After the White City mine was opened, within sight of our home, this train made daily stops at White City.

For the next twenty years this railroad was a very busy one. During that time the Consolidated Coal company opened and operated mines with numbers running from 10 through 19. Most of the coal from these mines was used by the Northwestern Railway Company. In order to get the miners, who lived in Buxton, to work at some of the mines, the Consolidated Coal Company ran work trains, sometimes twenty miles or more, taking the miners to the mine each morning and returning them to town at night.

Other smaller companies opened mines at Cricket, Durfee, White City, and Greenridge. The Greenridge mine took coal from a field that touched the southeast corner of our farm.

There was some rivalry among the different mines to see which mine could dump the most coal onto railroad cars in one eight hour working day. Mine number 13 claimed to dump 1300 tons on one day. Mine number 18 claimed they dumped 3774 tons in the same number of hours. The men who worked there said they could have dumped 4000 tons that day, but the railroad did not supply enough cars.

I have been told, by men whose fathers used to work for the Consolidated Coal Company, at the mine in Mahaska County, known as Muchachinack, that when a labor dispute arose at that mine, company officials went to West Virginia and brought back a number of Negro workers to operate the mine.

When this company moved into Monroe County, they took the Negro families and got more from the south. When I was working for this company, on a non-union job in 1909, I was told there were 5000 people in the town of Buxton, and more than half of them were Negroes. This count probably included the members of Swedetown, just east of Buxton proper, where Swedish miners lived.

Soon after World War I, most of the small mines were worked out. The Consolidated company was again faced with labor trouble and suddenly closed their last mine. When the mines closed, there was not much need for the railroad. It was abandoned and the track was taken up back to the town of What Cheer, Iowa.

The land that belonged to the railroad right-of-way was resold to the farms from which it was taken when the road was built. My sister, Mrs. W. C. Thomas, at that time a widow, bought the used right-of-way through her farm for twenty dollars per acre.

The coming of the railroad and the coal mines created a great demand for labor. This had some effect upon our family living. Miners frequently moved from one mine to another. Most of their wages were on a piece work basis. The highest earnings were usually made where there was a thick vein of clean coal with a good mine roof. Some of the miners were pretty restless. If they heard of a mine, where working conditions were better, they were tempted to move to the new mine.

Father and I took our teams and wagons and helped a number of mining families move their household goods. As this work was always paid in cash it helped to supplement our farm income. I heard of one miner who moved his family seven times in one twelve month period.

After I was big enough to handle a team by myself, father got a contract to haul coal from the coal mine at White City to the miners' houses in the town. Both of us worked for two winters hauling coal. We drove our farm wagons up to the mine scale, where the empty wagon was weighed. Then we drove down the railroad track, about one hundred yards, to a coal car, standing on the track. We had to shovel the coal over the side of the coal car into our wagon box. The load of coal was delivered to some miner's coal house, where we unloaded it with a scoop shovel. After collecting for the hauling from the lady of the house, we would drive back for another load. Father was always able to shovel his load faster than I could mine. When both of us worked all day we made from six to seven dollars. We thought that was pretty fair wages.

Sometimes, we found a market for some of our farm produce in White City. A few miners had driving horses. We sold them oats for feed. There were a number of Bohemian families living in this coal camp. We once sold them a fat calf to be eaten at a wedding feast, that lasted for two or three days.

The railroad established a station, Y, and coal washing plant at Lakonta, about four miles from our farm. At times we sold oats to a grain buyer there. That town also had a lumber yard and hardware store where we sometimes bought farm supplies.

Aside from Lakonta, our nearest trading town was Bussey, seven miles distant. The coal towns of White City and Greenridge had company stores, where miners bought most of their supplies. These stores would also sell to farmers. But we did not buy much there because we could buy much cheaper at Bussey or Oskaloosa.

In the early days of the coal mines in Monroe county, and nearer our home, we had to spend a long day driving our team to Oskaloosa, doing our shopping and driving home.

A number of businessmen, in and around Oskaloosa, began to talk of building an electric interurban line from Oskaloosa to Buxton, some twenty miles away. They solicited some farmers for donations of right-of-way or cash. Some of the promoters spoke in glowing terms of the ease with which a farmer could board the trolly, ride to Oskaloosa, do his shopping and return home the same afternoon.

When the company began to make collections for the proposed interurban line, they drew up a written contract in which they stated the road would begin building in Oskaloosa. As soon as the line reached Beacon, Iowa, a certain percent of the money, pledged, would become due and payable. The company built the line to Beacon, made the percentage collection and never built any nearer to Buxton.

WILD BEES AND HONEY

The spring and summer of 1903 was a very rainy season. The Des Moines River reached flood stage. One span of the Eveland bridge, which we usually crossed when driving to Oskaloosa, was dumped into the river by a giant tree that came down stream top first. For Nearly all the next year, when we drove to Oskaloosa, we had to cross the river at the lower bridge, several miles down stream. As late as 1959, a person driving over the K road from Albia to Oskaloosa would cross the Des Moines river on the Eveland bridge. That person might have noticed one span of that bridge which was different from the other spans. That odd span was the one which replaced the span dumped into the river in 1903. A new bridge was built across the river in 1959, and the K road changed its course.

The rainy season encouraged a heavy growth of white clover in all the pastures. Bee keepers were delighted. There is scarcely any other plant that produces better honey than white clover honey.

During several weeks of the summer of 1903 a bachelor friend of father's lives with us. His name was Isaac Palin. Ike, as father called him, liked to take his single barrel shot gun and hunt along the creek for squirrel and young rabbits. One day he came in and told us he had found a bee tree. In those days it was the unwritten law that any person who found a bee tree, even on another's farm, could put his mark on that tree, come back later, cut the tree and take the honey.

A few days later Sam Stroud, mother's brother, came to our house. Father, Sam, Ike and I took a ladder, rope, axe, saw, and some dish pans and went to the bee tree. We found the bees were in a large branch of the tree. Father set the ladder against the tree and Sam climbed up to saw off the branch that the bees were living in. When the branch was about to fall, father moved the ladder so it would not be broken by the falling tree limb. As soon as the limb fell, bees were all over Sam. He yelled, "Bring the ladder!" Father ran and set the ladder against the tree. Sam ran down and dived into the weeds and bushes to get the bees off his head and face. He was so badly stung that his face was swelled for hours.

We waited a little while for the bees to get quiet. Then we took some old gunny sacks and set them on fire so they would make smoke. We held this smoke near the bees in the log until they were partially stupified. Then we cut the log open and took out two or three dish pans full of comb, dripping, nice, clear honey.

A few days later Ike found three more bee trees. The next tree Ike and I cut by ourselves. It was a large silver maple. The trunk was hollow. It looked like there was a lot of honey. It was late in the afternoon when we got the big tree cut down. The bees were pretty furious. We built a small fire near the fallen tree trunk to smoke the bees. Soon it was time for me to go home and do the evening chores. We decided we would both go and come back after dark to get the honey. The bees would be more quiet after dark. After we had our supper we took the lantern and went to the tree. Before we got close we saw a bright light burning. On getting closer we discovered the entire tree was on fire. We thought that some of the honey dripped from the broken log into the fire we built in the afternoon, and that set the entire tree ablaze. We could only go home and regret that we would not get any honey from that tree.

We cut two more bee trees that summer. We got quite a little honey. We made two crude bee hives from the logs and took two swarms of bees home with us. My brother, Fred, was about four years old at that time. We had scarcely got the hives set up, some distance from our house, when father, mother, and

Fred came out to see them. Fred was stung by one of the bees and became unconscious almost immediately. He was sick for several hours.

Once Fred was at school, one mile from home. He was stung by a bee while on the playground. He started to walk home. He became unconscious and fell down in the public road, where he was found by one of our neighbor boys who brought him home. I was stung several times while cutting bee trees, but it did not make me sick. I was glad to have so much nice, clear honey to eat.

HOLIDAYS AND PICNICS

There were only a few holidays we tried to observe, when I was a boy. New Year's Day was just a time to put up a new calendar, or almanac, turn over a new leaf, and make good resolutions that would soon be broken.

Easter Sunday was a time to eat eggs. My step-mother's family, the Strouds, had a tradition that there must be plenty of eggs to eat on that day. Sometimes for one week before Easter the mother would be able to find only a few eggs in the hens' nests. What fun it was for one of the small boys to get up early on Easter morning and proudly bring in a few dozen eggs he had hidden away during the week.

Easter morning mother would begin cooking eggs. We could have our choice: soft boiled, hard boiled, fried, or sometimes pickled. We were encouraged to see who could eat the most eggs during the day. We ate them for breakfast. We ate them for dinner. We sometimes went into the woods in the afternoon and built a fire. Then we roasted eggs by placing them in the hot coals. Brother Ziba was always a good eater. One Easter he broke the family record by eating two dozen eggs, but he got pretty sick before night.

After we had our egg roast in the woods, we would go back to the house with our hands filled with Wild Easter Lily, or Trillium, which grew in abundance in our woods. Unless the season was extra late and Easter came early, we could always find these flowers in bloom on Easter Sunday.

Decoration Day was of little importance to us. The graves of my mother and grandparents were too far away to be visited every year. We were not especially interested in the public programs that were held on that day.

The Fourth of July was a time for celebrating. Usually there would be a public celebration in the grove near the Des Moines river, at Bussey, or Eddyville, or later at Lakonta. Father usually took the family in the big farm wagon. We took fried chicken, pies and other good things for our dinner at noon, and oats and hay for the horses. Father and mother rode on the spring seat in the front of the wagon. The kids rode on boards placed across the top of the wagon box.

I think it was the year after the Spanish-American war, we got bills advertising a Fourth of July celebration in Eddyville. These bills told us that a big feature of the fire-works that night would be the capture of Morro Castle.

Usually when we attended a celebration we did not stay for the fireworks, as we had to get back to the farm to milk the cows and do other chores. In some way arrangements were made to stay in Eddyville that night for the entire show.

After being at the celebration in the city park most of the day, when the shadows began to creep across the water, we walked down to the river bank and waited anxiously for the program to begin. Finally, when it was quite dark, we looked up the river and saw gunboats floating down opposite the castle across the river. The gunboats began firing Roman candles and rockets at the castle. The castle returned the fire. After the battle, which lasted one half hour or more, during which time one or two gunboats were disabled, the castle surrendered, and immediately caught fire. The light from the furning fort added splendor to the fireworks. As I rode home I thought I had seen a wonderful show.

Almost every summer a circus would come to Oskaloosa. Some weeks before we

would see big posters announcing the Big Show, usually the Greatest Show on Earth. If father had been wealthy I think he would have seen every circus that came to town, but we saw only a few of them. Each circus had a big free parade on the streets up town. We usually found it convenient to do our shopping on Circus Day. We were always in time for the parade. The parade was a big show in itself. It was made up of elephants, clowns, bands, cages of wild animals, big ornamental wagons, drawn by sleek looking horses in flashing harness, and last the steam calliope, playing popular tunes.

Father took us to one circus. We went into the big tent where the animals were kept. We took plenty of time looking at elephants, giraffes, monkeys, lions, tigers, hippotamus, ostrich and other birds that we never knew existed. Then we went into the big three ring tent. The grand entry was announced with a fanfare, blown by men dressed in bright scarlet coats. All the riders and main performers of the show moved in brisk procession once around the big ring. Then suddenly there was lively motion in each of the three rings. It was impossible to watch everything at once, but my eyes took in all they could.

One day Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show came to town. Father and I went to this show. We saw Buffalo Bill, himself, Anna Oakley, a troupe of Cossack riders from Russia, and some real American Indians. I was especially pleased to watch a troop of U. S. Cavalry demonstrate the Roman race and the monkey drill.

At least once each summer, some bright Sunday morning, all our family would get into the farm wagon and drive to the Des Moines river, about five miles distance, for a picnic. We took a good feed for the horses and plenty of good food for ourselves. We would unhitch the horses in the shade of the trees on the river bank and tie them to the wagon. Then we picked out a good spot to spread our picnic table. If it was not quite noon, father might rest in the shade, while I and other children walked along the river bank exploring.

After we had eaten all we could hold, father would go to Harvey Lockwood's house, a short distance away, and rent his skiff, so we all could have a boat ride. Father would row us across the river to a sand bar. Here, barefooted, we waded in the shallow water and picked up clam shells, snail shells, and bright pebbles. Once or twice I found a live clam.

Later in the afternoon father and I would go down the river, out of sight of the girls and go swimming in our birthday suits.

Before we went home we often drove across the river and stopped at the watermelon patch owned by Tom Wilson. We usually found Tom in the patch. He would give us a melon as a sample. We always bought melons before we left the patch. We could get two or three or more big melons for one dollar. These melons were placed in the cool cave that night. About the middle of the next morning all hands were called to the melon feed. I believe father enjoyed watermelon better than any other member of the family. He told me that one time he weighed himself before eating melon. He weighed immediately after eating and was four pounds heavier.

The first Sunday in September was usually the big Sunday at the Quaker Meeting in Oskaloosa. Father's brother-in-law, John Stuart, was a member of the Friends or Quaker church. One time Uncle John came to visit us from his home in Richland, Iowa. We met him at the railway station in Oskaloosa and brought him home. The next day, being Sunday, all of us went to the Quaker meeting, held on or near the grounds where Penn College now stands. Father liked to attend one of these Sunday meetings, because he would often meet his brother, Mason Mott, and other folks he

knew, but did not often see elsewhere. We always took a picnic dinner when we went to these meetings. Most of the time, before we went home, father visited the graves of his parents, which is just over the fence north of the Penn College buildings.

It was not until after the coal mines were opened in our community that we paid any attention to Labor Day. One time the miners at White City held a Labor Day celebration in the woods near the creek, about one-half mile from our farm. Father and I went over in the afternoon. I think father was about fifty-six that year. A foot race for men over fifty was called. Father pulled off his shoes and entered the 100-yard dash. He won the race and collected three silver dollars.

Another Labor Day was celebrated in Bussey. Some miners from White City wanted transportation to this celebration. Father and I each took a farm wagon and placed boards across the top of the box, so we could each haul a load of men. I think we charged one dollar for each passenger, round trip. The main attraction at this celebration was a speech by John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers Union. At that time he was holding a union office at Albia, Iowa. He later was noted for his work as National President of the United Mine Workers.

Thanksgiving Day often found us with corn still unhusked in the field. If the weather was suitable we would spend the day trying to husk the last few rows of corn before the winter snow started falling. We were especially thankful if all the corn was in the crib before the first snow came.

Birthdays were more a time of torture than enjoyment. My birthday came during the winter term of school. I tried to keep the day a secret but I never got by longer than the first recess. Somehow, by that time someone would know it was my birthday. All the kids in school would crowd around me. Each one had to pat me on the back as many times as I was years old, and one to grow on. By the time all had patted me, some not very lightly, I wished there was no such thing as a birthday. I got even with some of the other kids when their birthdays came. Lucky was the kid who was born in July or August. There was no school during the summer months.

Christmas, there was a day to be remembered! Regardless of how bad the weather, or how little money father had, he always made sure there was something special put into each of the stockings we hung up before we went to bed Christmas Eve. For a few years I believed explicitly in Santa Claus. I had never seen the old boy. In fact I was told that if I was not asleep when he called at our house, he might not leave anything for me. How can a youngster today believe firmly in Santa Claus when he sees one in every store he visits for one whole month before Christmas?

One time the weather had been bad for several days, but there was no snow on the ground. I was worried. How could Santa travel with his sleigh and reindeer, where there was no snow? When I awoke early, on Christmas morning, I found my stockings filled with candy, an apple or orange, a jackknife or a jumping-jack. I was delighted with everything. Then I looked out the window and saw that several inches of snow had fallen during the night. That was the reason Santa had been able to make his rounds. Some years later I found the real reason why I had a full stocking Christmas morning. The day before Christmas, father walked through the rain to the country store, about two and one half miles away, and made the purchases necessary for our enjoyment.

Father always managed to have plenty of hard store candy at Christmas time. He could eat more of it than any one of us could eat. A few years after I was married, I decided to eat all the candy I could on Christmas Day. I started early

in the morning. About noon I had a very severe heart burn. Never again did I try to eat candy like I did when a kid. I don't understand how father could do it.

We usually had roast duck, goose, turkey or wild rabbit for our Christmas dinner. One time we had a Christmas tree in our house. Mrs. Charlie Fisher, mother's sister, came over with her family. Someone cut a red cedar tree out in the timber. The tree was brought in and decorated with candles and presents. It was daylight so we pulled down the window shades. Then we lighted the candles and watched carefully, to make sure the tree did not catch fire. After we watched the beautiful sight a few minutes, the candles were blown out, the presents were distributed and everybody was happy.

NEW INVENTIONS

I do not remember just when I first heard that Thomas A. Edison had invented the phonograph, or "talking machine", as we called it. One day in Oskaloosa, probably not more than one year after the destruction of the Battleship Maine, I was standing on the street, listening to a man explain the machine he was showing. It was a rather small machine with a hollow wax cylinder. For one dime the man offered to let anyone put the ear plugs, which were attached to the machine by a small rubber hose, into his ears and hear the recording of the burial of the men who lost their lives when the Battleship Maine was blown up.

I can hear him now, as if it happened just one hour ago, saying, "Again you will hear Captain Sigsby, formerly of the Maine, giving orders to the firing squad as they round the graves for prayer." How wonderful it seemed to me that a machine could talk and tell the story of such an historical event. I watched some men listen. By the expression on their faces I knew the machine was not a fake. I wished that I might listen but I did not. Perhaps I did not have a dime in my pocket.

Not long after that, we heard Little Jim Plum, a cousin of mother's, had sold the rights to all the coal under his farm, for something like $50.00 per acre, and he could still keep and farm the land. The sale of these coal rights had made him so wealthy that he had paid off the mortgage on his farm and had money left over. So he bought a "Talking machine". Sometime later father had some business with Mr. Plum. I went over to the house with father. The family seemed glad to demonstrate the machine. It could not only talk, it could sing and play musical instruments as well.

Before 1900 we saw very little use made of gas engines. Before that time the section men on the railroad used a hand car to get from the station to where they were working on the track. This car was operated by anywhere from two to six men who stood up and pumped handles to make the car run. Today the section men ride sitting down on a small car powered by a gas engine. The men ride faster and much easier than on the hand car. It would be impossible for me to mention all the different ways that gas engines are used today. Both on the farms and in industry.

When I was attending the country school at about the age of ten, we read the poem, "Darius Greene and His Flying Machine". We laughed at the failure of this young batman, and we agreed among ourselves, that man would never fly in a heavier than air machine. How could we know that within a very few years two young men at Kitty Hawk, S. C. would demonstrate that we were entirely wrong? About 1913 I saw Lincoln Beechy fly all over the grounds at the Iowa State Fair. A short time later he was killed in a flying accident.

I was quite small when I heard people talking about a "Horseless carriage". One Fourth of July we went down to a grove, about one mile west of the Eveland bridge on the Des Moines river, where an all day celebration was held. Here we saw a man driving a carriage draped with bunting. He advertised it as a horseless carriage. It ran with no noise and traveled at a fairly good rate. We wondered what furnished the motive power, until we got close enough to peep under the bunting. Then we discovered the machine was indeed a horseless carriage. A small mule had been hitched behind a small buggy in such a way that as the mule went forward he pushed the buggy. A man sat in the seat of the buggy and guided the machine.

By 1907, Ben Buxton, of the Consolidated Coal Company, was driving a small

automobile past our farm. We were very much afraid to meet him on the road, because our horses might be frightened and try to run away.

Only a few of our neighbors had telephones when I left the farm in 1907. Several years later, a phone was installed at our house.

We had heard about the experiments of Marconi with wireless communication. When I attended Highland Park College in 1912, the Engineering department of the college put on an exhibit of things new in engineering. They showed a device by which one machine could cause an electric light bulb to shine on another machine a few feet distance, yet not connected to the first machine in any way.

In the winter of 1915-16, I was superintendent of schools at Truesdale, Iowa. I conducted a series of lyceum lectures in the school for the benefit of the community. One of the entertainers on this course demonstrated some of the wonders of science. He had a toy battleship on which a toy gun was mounted. When someone volunteered to carry the battleship across the room, the lecturer waited until the ship was a few feet from the table. Then he pressed a button and the toy gun fired, although the ship was in no way connected to the table.

These simple demonstrations were the forerunner of the building of radio sets. A short time before father died he was in some business place in Bussey when he heard music being played. The owner of the store told father that music was coming from Kansas City. How wonderful music could travel that distance without wires. If someone had told father that in my day pictures would be sent through the air so people in Iowa could see the Rose Bowl football game being played in California, he would have found it hard to believe.

During my early childhood there were no movies, even in the cities. Once in a while someone would advertise a magic lantern show. A machine threw a light onto a canvas and still pictures were shown. In some cases it was possible to make certain parts of the picture move. Once I saw a picture of The Rat Eater While Asleep. The picture showed a man asleep with his mouth open, and rats were running into it. In some way the picture was reversed and the rats came back out of the man's mouth. I thought this was quite a funny show.

The first real motion picture I saw was shown at a street carnival in Oskaloosa. The title of the picture, "The Great Train Robbery". This picture was strictly in black and white. The light caused the picture to flicker a great deal. A person had to stand with a megaphone and explain what the picture was supposed to be showing. It was several more years before the talking pictures became common.

One invention that had great effect upon the dairy industry was the centrifugal cream separator. I remember that for several years mother strained our milk into gallon crocks, which were placed in the cool cave for several hours. Then she took a thin, tin skimmer, much like a large, shallow spoon, and skimmed the cream off the top of the milk. The skim milk was then used for drinking, making cottage cheese, for cooking or for feeding to pigs and calves. Undoubtedly a lot of butterfat was thrown away with the skim milk.

One time we bought a large metal can, called a separator. It was big enough to hold all the milk taken from the cows at one milking. Cool water was poured into the milk. After the cream had raised the watered milk was drawn off through a faucet at the bottom of the can. There was a glass in the front side of the can near the bottom so a person could tell when the skim milk had been drawn off. Then the cream was run out through the faucet. This separator had the advantage of putting

all the milk into one container, so there was only one to wash. I doubt if it was much more efficient in skimming than was the method where crocks were used.

At another time we bought a double can. With it the milk was put into the inside can and cool water was poured around it, not into the milk. The milk and cream was drawn off at the bottom of the can the same as in the can described above.

Finally the centrifugal separator came on the market. We bought one. Father or I had to turn the crank of this machine two times each day. But we got much more cream. We could cool it immediately after separating, and it would keep sweet longer. Before father left the farm the folks sold a lot of cream on the market.

When I first started to school in Oskaloosa, I came in contact with schools teaching commercial subjects. I often heard students tell about their troubles in bookkeeping. One instructor told about some business house where the bookkeeper looked for hours to locate a mistake of only one cent on his balance sheet. At the present time, I very much appreciate the new, up-to-date machine which adds my accounts. It also assists me in multiplication and subtraction. Such a machine was never heard of in my boyhood days.

PLAYING SOLDIER

There is a book in my private library, entitled A Brief History of the United States. This book, copyrighted by A. S. Barnes and Company in 1885, was the textbook used in all the rural schools of Mahaska County, Iowa when I was a lad.

In reviewing this copy today I find the author, by the use of footnotes and other articles, printed in type much finer than that of the regular story, gave a great deal of information about the life and living conditions of people in each epoch.

Without reading the fine print, it seemed to me, the author especially emphasized war. Whether it was the intention of the teachers to magnify war in their teaching of history I do not know. Somehow, as a young boy, I thought of U. S. History as being just one war following another.

It began with the wars between the early settlers and the Indians. These were followed in rapid succession by the wars between England, France, and Spain, the American Revolution, the war of 1812, the Mexican War and the Civil War. During my lifetime I have had knowledge of the Spanish-American War, the Boxer Uprising, the Philippine War, World War I, World War II, and the Korean War, followed by seemingly endless cold war.

In my childish imagination, a good soldier was a much greater hero than any other man could possibly be. Every soldier, with very few exceptions, like the traitor, Benedict Arnold, was brave, honest, true and loyal. I could not help thinking if there was a war in my country when I became a man, I would certainly enlist as a soldier.

Perhaps this imagination was helped by hearing that Grandfather Mott enlisted as a soldier in the Union Army in 1862, at the age of fifty-three. I also knew some survivors of the Civil War, like George Nevins, Moore Hill, Jack Banks, Marion Belzer, and John Pilgrim. Sometimes, at Fourth of July celebrations, or old settlers' picnics, these men would march in the parades. I remember father said they did not keep step like they did in Civil War days.

When the Spanish-American War began I heard the government was calling for volunteers. I was not old enough to enlist but I became a real soldier. In those days it was a little harder to secure an American flag than it is today. I did not have a flag. I understood that every group of soldiers had a flag, so I made a flag.

It was a piece of gingham, or calico that mother gave me. It was, probably, ten inches wide and about eighteen inches long. True it did not have the stars and stripes, like the real American flag, but it was my flag, with two or more of the colors, like red and white. I set a ten foot flag pole upright in the ground. A rope ran over the top of the pole in such a way that I could attach my flag to it and raise and lower the flag each time I held army drill.

Father had made me a wooden sword from a broom handle. I had a revolver which I had whittled out for myself. With an old, discarded dishpan for a drum, I marched many miles around my flagpole, beating the drum and playing I was a real soldier.

In school our teacher tried to make us more patriotic by teaching us to sing the following song:

"We're Sailing for Cuba Now"

On the other side of the Atlantic is a nation that's called Spain.
Her ruler is King Alphonso. His country destroyed the Maine.
She rules a land of Cuba with a despotic hand and sends among the natives
a most tyrannic man.

Refrain

We're sailing for Cuba now. We're sailing for Cuba now.
We'll save that land from a tyrant's hand.
We're sailing for Cuba now.

All honor to our navy that's sailing o'er the sea,
And risking lives and fortunes that Cuba may be free.
God speed the Flying Squadron and a patrol to,
Protect the North Atlantic that carries our boys so true.

Refrain

All honor to our boys at home who'll volunteer to stand
And fight for the honor of country, rescue a fallen band.
And when the war is over and we've defeated Spain,
We'll land our boys in Cuba. They'll sing in Cuba then.

New Refrain

They'll sing in Cuba then. They'll sing in Cuba then.
They saved our land from a tyrant's hand. They'll sing in Cuba then."
-- Author unknown.

I got a big thrill by reading the newspaper accounts of the Rough Riders and their charge up San Juan Hill, led by Teddy Roosevelt. George Dewey became a national hero over night when he captured Manila.

In the summer of 1916, while a student at Highland Park College, Des Moines, Iowa, I went out to Camp Dodge, one afternoon, and watched the National Guard companies drill. One of my classmates said to me, "Wouldn't it seem terrible for these, fine strong, young men to go to war and be shot to pieces?" With that question, I began to think war might be a serious business.

The next summer our country had declared war on Germany. On Memorial Day I was on the streets of downtown Des Moines and watched a company of soldiers take part in the big parade. I could not help wishing I were a soldier.

I went back to college and talked with Professor French, my teacher and counselor. I told him I thought I would enlist in the army. He replied, "There are many young men who can carry a rifle, march and fight, just as well or better than you. While at the same time they have not been trained for any special job. You have been trained as a school superintendent and teacher of agriculture. Since the selective service act is now in effect you will, probably, do as much good for your country by remaining in your present work until your draft board calls you."

I decided to take his advise. During the time of the big drawing in Washington, all the boys on our college campus watched the newspapers rather anxiously to see when each one's number came up. I drew a high number.

My brother, Wesley, went overseas with the Rainbow Division. Brother Ziba enlisted late in the fall of '17. Father and mother spent many anxious hours waiting for letters, postmarked, "Somewhere in France". They knew that at any moment they might receive a communication from the war department informing them of the death of one or both the boys.

During the winter of 1918-19 the folks did not receive a letter from Ziba for several weeks. They thought that something must be wrong with him. One day they received a letter which bore the name of an army chaplain. Mother began to cry, as she thought it must be a death message. To the relief of all the folks at home, the letter stated that Ziba was in the hospital and had been very sick with pneumonia, but he was recovering in a satisfactory manner. The chaplain thought he would be able to return home after a few more weeks.

In the summer of 1918 brother Fred decided he could no longer remain at home. He was only nineteen and father needed him to take care of the work on the farm, but he enlisted, hoping to get overseas. Instead he was sent to California until the war was over.

In July, 1918, I was called to report to my draft board, prepared to enter military service on the twenty-fourth day of the month. This was just eight weeks after my wedding date.

I entered service at Storm Lake, Iowa, and was taken by train directly to Camp Gordon, Georgia. Here I became a member of Company C, Fourth Replacement Regiment. As our train pulled out of Storm Lake, on that hot July morning, the boy in the same seat with me, leaned so far out of the open window, I thought he might fall clear out of the car. He shouted, "If we don't bring home the bacon, there won't be any Rhine left."

About a month after we got to camp a large number of boys were taken from our regiment and sent overseas. Just before they left I talked with the boy who shared the seat with me as we left Storm Lake. He told me he was going overseas. In November of that year I happened to get a copy of the Storm Lake newspaper. In that paper I read the announcement of the death of my buddy. He got to the front lines in time to be killed in action. His is one of the names placed on the statue in the Storm Lake park in memory of the boys from that vicinity who never came back.

Of father's five sons, four were in the army during World War I. All of us came back. None of us were wounded in action, but Ziba, after taking part in engagements on the Marne, St. Mehiel and Belleau-Wood, contracted pneumonia. At that time many wounded men were being carried back from the front. Wounded men went ahead of sick men. Ziba's weight was usually about one hundred and sixty-five pounds. Before he left the hospital he weighed one hundred and ten pounds. He was discharged the next summer with no physical disability. Today we feel, that had his system not been weakened by army hardships, he might not have died three years later.

In World War II, my own son was called to the colors, at the age of eighteen. The night he started for camp I took him to the train. As I bid him goodbye, I wished him good luck and tried to smile. When the train had gone, I went back to my house. It was a bright, moonlight, summer night. The other members of the household were asleep. I sat down in the porch swing and wept real tears for several minutes. Mother and I were both glad to hear of the surrender of both Germany and Japan before Clyde was ordered overseas. Although he spent one year in Europe after hostilities ceased, he came back to us safe and sound.

Today, I no longer wish to play soldier. I have come to feel as General Sherman, when he said, in substance, "Talk about the glory of war. There is no glory. War is Hell." In these days of hydrogen bombs and guided missiles, and all the other great forces of mass destruction, I believe we, as nations, must live without war, or face destruction, such as has never been seen before on earth.

GOING SHOPPING

On a bright, cold December morning father hitched the team of horses to the bob sled and drove them up in front of the farm house. He tied one horse to the fence post and came into the house to get his heavy, hairy, horsehide overcoat. Before he hitched up the team he had put a big forkful of hay into the wagon box on the bob sled.

After he and I had both got real warm beside the wood burning heating stove we pulled the eartabs of our caps down around our ears and buttoned our coats up tight. We fastened our overshoes, pulled mittens over our hands. We then took two or three heavy bed comforters in our hands and climbed into the bob sled. Father sat on the spring seat and drove the horses. I sat on the hay in the bottom of the sled box and wrapped the heavy comforters around me. We started on our shopping trip to Oskaloosa, thirteen miles away.

We had had one or two good snowfalls during the past week. In those days no attempt was made to remove snow from the roads unless drifts piled too high. Then the drifts were shoveled out by men with scoopshovels. On the day I mention, the snow was packed down just right to make good sledding all the way to Oskaloosa and even on the paved streets of the city.

Although the sun shown brightly there was a fairly brisk wind from the northwest. The temperature did not get high enough that day to melt any snow. After I had ridden about six or eight miles I began to get cold. I jumped out of the sled and as I hung on to the sled box with one hand father started the team on a slow trot. I ran fast enough to keep up with the sled. Soon my heart was beating rather fast. The warm blood flowed rapidly into my cold fingers and toes, making me feel warm all over. After running about one fourth mile I was ready to jump back into the sled and snuggle under the comforters.

When we reached town we took our team to the feed barn, some two blocks west and one or two blocks north of the site of the present Christian church. After unhitching the horses, giving them water, and tying them in the shed, we walked to the Howard Brothers' Grocery store on the south side of the square. By this time I was thoroughly chilled. I was glad to sit beside the big, coal burning stove in the rear of the store until I was completely warmed up.

At twelve noon we walked to the home of Mister Bowman, where he was serving home cooked meals. We sat at a large table in the big dining room. The food consisted of meat, potatoes, gravy, one or two vegetables, bread and butter. For drink we could have milk or coffee. We could eat as much as we wanted. When a dish was empty it was quickly refilled. Dessert usually was pie or cake. As we arose from the table father paid for the two dinners with a fifty cent piece.

After dinner we went to the shoe store where I was fitted with a pair of felt boots with heavy overshoes. I had been having trouble with cold feet when wearing leather shoes and overshoes. My felt boots kept my feet warm the rest of the winter.

Out on the street father often stopped to visit with someone he knew from other parts of the country. The shopping and visiting caused the short winter afternoon to pass quickly. By five o'clock we were ready to go to the feed barn and get our team and sled. We drove the team to the hitch racks on the south side of the square. Father went into Howard's grocery and bought a 100 pound sack of sugar, four 49 pound sacks of flour. He also bought a few spices, a few pounds of dried peaches, a box of soda, and one of baking powder. To show his appreciation of our trade and prompt

cash payment the grocer put up a two pound sack of hard store candy. This was a special treat for the members of the family who were at home.

After the gas lights were lighted on the streets, on that cold night, we started to drive home. The trip took us two and one half hours to complete. We reached home about eight P. M. We had spent nearly twelve hours on our shopping trip. Mother and the younger children had the chores all done before we reached home. As soon as we could unhitch and care for our horses we sat down to the warm supper which mother had waiting for us. The comfortable feeling of a well filled stomach and a warm stove soon made me drowsy. I was glad to go to bed early and enjoy a refreshing sleep.

SCHOOL DAYS

In the year 1893 I attended my first term of school. The Jefferson schoolhouse was one fourth mile west and three quarters of a mile south of our house. Unless we walked across a neighbor's field, as we often did, we walked one mile to school in the morning and walked, or ran, one mile home in the evening.

On extremely cold mornings the folks had me put on so much clothing that I often broke out in heavy perspiration. I sometimes caught severe colds because of it. There were times when my fingers and toes got so cold I was glad to stop at the house of Mr. Ross or Mr. Pickerell and get warm before going on to school. At times the snow was soft and deep. This made walking very tiresome. Other times the snow was piled into huge drifts. A heavy crust on top made it fun, and easy walking, to go over the top of the drifts. But there were many days, in the spring and fall, when the weather was nearly perfect. On such days I enjoyed my walks to school very much. I watched many different kinds of birds. I enjoyed listening to their songs. In late May there were beautiful wild roses along the roadside. In October the trees showed a riot of changing colors.

Most of the school houses of that time were built on the same order. The long way of the building was north and south. There were three windows on the east and three on the west. At Jefferson the north end of the building was toward the road, but the front door was on the back side, or on the south.

There was a dark, slate blackboard on the south side and another on the north side. The woodwork was painted a dark brown. There was no provision for artificial light. On cloudy, winter days it was often very difficult to study because of the poor light.

When I started to school the room was filled with seats and desks, designed for pupils who were almost grown up. A little youngster must sit all day with his feet suspended several inches above the floor. Each desk held an Ink well, supplied with a metal cover. The ink well, kept filled for penmanship classes, offered a great temptation to a mischievous boy. If the pigtails of the girl, sitting in front of him, fell on his desk, he might find it convenient to dip the said pigtails into the ink well.

The house was heated with a large, coal burning stove. When I arrived at school, on a very cold morning, I might find the only place in the room that was warm enough for comfort was near the stove. I have often received permission to sit near the hot stove for the first fifteen or twenty minutes after school opened. By that time I was warm enough to return to my regular desk.

Maude McClure was my first teacher. Compared with present day standards, teachers of that day were very poorly trained. If a young lady, or man, had completed the eighth grade, and had taken one or two weeks instruction at the county institute, conducted each summer by the county superintendent of schools, she or he, could write an examination. If the written test was passed successfully, the writer was granted a teacher's certificate and declared qualified to teach.

If a teacher were fairly good in discipline, and could solve every problem in White's arithmetic, she was usually accepted in that school as a good teacher.

Very few married women taught school. When they got married they were supposed to stay home and raise a family. Only a few young men became teachers. One grandmother told me she thought a young man must be pretty lazy if he would teach school.

Evidently, she thought there was no work required to teach a country school, which enrolled forty pupils in all grades from first to eighth.

Each teacher and pupil took a cold lunch to school, to eat during the noon hour. My lunch pail, usually a tin, syrup pail, was filled with bread and butter. At times I had a sandwich, made by enclosing a large piece of fresh pork, or pork sausage, between two bigs slices of home made bread. Occasionally I had an apple or canned fruit. Mother always warned us not to throw away any uneaten lunch. "Bring it home for chicken feed."

I was always nearly starved when I reached home at the end of the day. If mother had just taken a batch of home made bread from the oven, and the kitchen was filled with that delightful aroma, which fresh bread can produce, I was overjoyed to receive the heel of a loaf, covered with good, old country sorghum.

We did not have a well at our school. Soon after school began each morning some pupil would ask, "Teacher, may me and Charlie go after a bucket of water?" If "Me and Charlie" had done our work satisfactorily the day before, we were allowed to walk to the home of Mr. Springer and pump a bucket of water. We would carry it on a stick, held between us, back to the school house. The distance to the well was one fourth mile.

Sometimes a pupil would ask permission to pass the water. If permission was granted, the pupil placed a long handled dipper into the bucket and started down the aisles, offering a drink to each pupil in turn. If a pupil was not very thirsty, and did not drink all the water in the dipper, he poured it back into the bucket. One bucket of water was usually made to last all day for from ten to thirty pupils. Very few people seemed to be afraid of germs. At times an entire school was closed because of whooping cough, measles or other disease.

When I started to school, paper tablets were expensive. Very few tablets were used in the school. Each pupil must have a slate and slate pencil. A single slate often cost the price of one dozen eggs. Fortunate was the kid who owned a double slate. The double slate was two single slates, fastened together in such a way that the two parts could be turned like the pages of a book.

Arithmetic problems and language, or spelling lessons were written on the slate. After the work was checked by the teacher, it could be erased. Most pupils kept sponges, or rags in their desks. When dipped into the common wash pan, the wet rag, or sponge was used to wash the slate. If there was no water in the house, the slate was cleaned by spitting on it.

In the eighteen nineties rural teachers in our township were drawing the big salary of twenty dollars per month. Out of the monthly salary, the teacher, probably, paid eight dollars for board and room. The teacher usually boarded with some family in the district. If this family happened to have children in school, the children of other families sometimes thought the teacher was just a little partial to the children where she boarded.

This was not always true. I remember, very distinctly, of one teacher who was boarding at home. She also had a younger sister as a pupil. One day, during a recess period, some pupils became unruly. The teacher suddenly appeared inside the building with a stout switch. She quickly whipped some of the larger pupils with it. Her sister was included with the others.

Some teachers spent at least a part of the noon hour on the playground, taking

part in the children's games. Others spent nearly all their noon and recess periods inside the building. Those who played with the children were usually the most popular.

The school-house was the social center of the community. Nearly every winter at least one spelling school would be held at each school in the township. Since the buildings were not provided with artificial lights, farmers often brought their coal oil lanterns to be hung around the room. The lanterns furnish enough light so paople could see each other and the teacher could see to pronounce the words.

The best spellers would come from the neighboring schools. Anyone who wished could stand up in the line around the walls of the room. So long as no words were misspelled, he could keep his position. If he missed a word, and the person in line below him spelled it correctly, the speller moved ahead of the one defeated. In a short time the best speller was standing at, or near, the head of the line.

Later in the evening the poor spellers would be seated. The best spellers would enter a real contest to see who was the best speller in the house. In this contest, known as a spell-down, if a speller missed a word, he took his seat. The others continued until there were only two left standing. There was often a real contest between these two. Each one was doing his level best to win the honor for himself, his class, or his school. After several minutes of tension, one would miss a word. If the next one was able to spell that word correctly, he was declared the winner of the spelling school. It was considered to be a great honor to be the best speller in the township.

An ambitious teacher would stage a box social in her school house some evening. Each young lady of the community would be invited to prepare a lunch for two, placed inside a cardboard box. The box could be decorated in any way that suited the girl's fancy. The young men would bid at auction on each box as presented for sale. No one was supposed to know the owner of the box until after it was sold. The buyer would open the box and find the name of the girl inside. Many a romance began when a couple met for the first time at a box social. The girl and the buyer were supposed to eat lunch together. Money from the sale of the boxes was used to buy new books for the school library, or to buy some special equipment, like, a piano or organ.

One night all the patrons of the district would be invited to attend a special program presented by the pupils. The program was composed of songs, recitations, or one act plays. Parents were proud to see their children taking part in such programs.

Occasionally some outside talent would rent the school house for one evening of entertainment. One night I saw a magic lantern show at our school. This show was simply a series of still pictures thrown onto a screen. I very distinctly remember a lecture delivered by Captain Ely at our school. He claimed to be a retired sailor who had served for years on a whaling vessel. He had a harpoon gun, the lower jaw of a small whale, and other things of interest to show regarding the work of capturing whales.

We had the Bethel church in our community, so we did not use the school house for religious services. In some communities, Sunday School, or preaching services, were conducted in the school house each week, with the full consent of all the taxpayers in the community.

For a long time the school year consisted of seven months. This year was divided into three different terms. Starting the first week in September the fall term lasted two months.

This was followed by a corn picking vacation of one month. It was a long, slow and tedious process to pick forty, or more, acres of corn by hand. The older pupils must work in the fields at this time. Younger pupils helped by feeding livestock or doing other chores. Every school in our rural area must have a corn picking vacation.

The winter term, of three months, began the first week in December. This was usually the most difficult time for the teacher. Many big boys, who had to work during the spring and fall, came to school in the winter. The teacher also had to be responsible for building and maintaining fires and for sweeping and dusting the school building and furniture.

Dirt roads were often nearly impassible during March. There was no school that month. The spring term began the first week of April and lasted two months.

It was a big event, at our house, when the teacher came home to spend the night with us. We had talked about it with our folks. The invitation was issued at least one week in advance. Mother tried to have the house in the finest possible shape. She also tried to have something extra for the table, and for ours and the teacher's lunch the next day. Every member of the family was on his best behavior, and tried to give the teacher the very best impression of our home.

DISEASE

During the past seventy years great strides have been made in preventive medicine and in learning to ward off destructive diseases.

One thing that seems remarkable to the members of the Bakers' Dozen now is the fact that all of us grew to adulthood. Two or three generations ago it was customary for farm couples to have a large number of children. But if anyone will take the time to wander through a cemetery that has been used for 60 years or more he will find many grave markers erected to those who died as infants or young children. Some couples might bring ten or twelve children into the world, only to lose at least one half of them before they reached maturity. The methods of sanitation were not well understood. Doctors knew little about preventive medicine as compared to the present time. On the farms, house flies hatched in abundance. Most any day of the week, in the summer months, many teams of horses were hitched at the hitch racks around the square in Oskaloosa. Flies swarmed around the droppings and flew into all the stores. At threshing time on most farms someone had to stand with a leafy branch of a tree and wave it back and forth over the table to shoo the flies off the food until the men could come to dinner.

Many children died from diptheria, smallpox, measles, scarlet fever and dysentery. At different times our family had experience with smallpox, measles, scarlet fever, and other diseases, but in spite of them all the children reached maturity.

In my boyhood days I had not heard of appendicitis or polio. It seems that as medical science conquors one disease, another springs up to take its place. But in spite of that, the average span of life has greatly increased during my lifetime.

For a time polio was a very destructive disease. It has not yet been completely eliminated. Every community has cripples made so by that disease, but with the new vaccines now in use we hope polio will soon be no more destructive than is smallpox, diptheria and others that were common a half century ago.

I asked my niece, Mrs. Wilma Elder Gardner, to write of her experience with polio. Here is her story:

MY LIFE WITH POLIO
By Wilma Elder Gardner

It was really a shock to me in September, 1948, when I learned that I had polio. It was the height of the polio season and I had suspected it after three days of severe leg pains. However, a call to my doctor dispelled all fear and he assured me that it wasn't polio because I did not have the usual symptoms. That was on Saturday before Labor Day and I was to go to his office on Tuesday for a complete examination.

Before that day came I was in the hospital. I became very ill on Labor Day and began to lose the use of my right leg. I entered the hospital that evening and by Tuesday morning my right leg was completely useless. Two days later my left leg was paralized.

I was in the isolation ward for sixteen days. The normal time was three weeks but I was allowed the five days off for the time I was ill at home.

I eagerly looked forward to the day when I would get out of isolation because then I could start taking physical therapy treatments. I looked forward to them as if they were something magic that could quickly restore my lost muscle power, but they did not work that way. Instead I found that my nerve cells were damaged so extensively that they could not be restored.

The realization of that fact did not come quick nor easy. I continued to feel that when I left the hospital I would walk out normally. It was a shock when I was told that I would have to wear full leg braces, then another shock later to learn that I would also have to use crutches.

As time went by I began to think about getting home to spend Christmas with my family, a girl of 18 months, a boy of 4 years, and my husband. On Thanksgiving Day I got my braces and crutches. I was told I could be dismissed by Christmas if I learned to walk on them by that time. That was a challenge for me. In a week's time I was walking unassisted but of course I needed help to get up on my feet and I needed lots of practice.

I left the hospital December 11. I went back twice a week for two years for therapy treatments. I have never regained the use of my legs. I use a wheel chair in my home but stand balanced against the cabinet, stove, etc. to do my work in the kitchen. I drive a car equipped with hand controls.

I have tried to live as near normal a life as possible with the handicap that I have. However, I have had to forego lots of pleasures, large and small, and I shall never overcome the desire to walk again.

My polio attack came at a time when they knew very little to do for the disease. There was no vaccine to prevent it or to make it a light case if a person should contact polio. We have a vaccine now but I hope there will be still greater progress along that line so as to give greater assurance to children and older people that they can live a normal, active life.

DEATH

Although my mother, my Aunt Amy, and my paternal grandmother, all died in our house after I was born, I do not remember anything about their funerals.

One Sunday in the early summer of the year 1896 our family visited at the Marion Belzer home. Emma Belzer, Marion's wife, was father's niece. At that time there were four children in the Belzer family; Tom, Hosea, Molly and Esther.

Hosea, the youngest, was about fourteen. He and a neighbor boy both had rubber sling shots which they were using to kill robins, catbirds, and any other birds they could find. I was only nine years old, and in the eyes of the older boys, I was just a little kid. They paid little attention to me. I had never seen song birds killed before and I felt sorry for the birds.

One evening in early fall, of that same year, father came home from Oskaloosa, Mother went out to meet him. I remained in the house. When mother came in she said, "Frank, Hosea Belzer is dead." I wondered why. Soon after father came in, I learned from the conversation that Hosea had gone to the horse stable and had taken lines from the harness. With these lines he had hanged himself to a large limb of a big tree, just a short distance from the house, but back of a small hill. I believe his father and brother found him hanging when they came home from work in a coal mine.

We attended the funeral. The body had been laid out in the house. The casket was black. The hearse was black. The team of horses pulling the hearse was black. The undertaker wore a black suit. The mother and near female relatives wore black dresses.

The service was conducted in the home. The undertaker furnished extra chairs for the crowd of people. When the service was over, before the casket was closed, all the near relatives stood near the casket for the last farewell, while the neighbors and friends watched to see how we took our grief.

Then a long line of spring wagons and top buggies followed the hearse, at a slow pace, to the graveyard.

The minister spoke a few words at the graveside. Then four men lowered the casket into the open grave by using leather straps. Someone stepped down into the grave and fastened the lid of the rough box that covered the casket. Then, while all the relatives were standing near, the grave diggers began shoveling dirt and closed the grave as rapidly as possible. Some of the mourners, who had been calm until that moment, broke into loud wails when they heard the clods strike the top of the rough box.

It seems to me now that services in that day were designed to create as much sadness as possible. Then a widow was supposed to dress in black for from six months to one year after the death of her husband.

Every grave was rounded up into a mound two or three feet high. Once, when attending a funeral, I stepped on one of those mounds. Mother criticized me severely for stepping on a grave. Today all graves are level and caretakers walk all over them guiding power lawn mowers.

Sixty years ago the body was laid out and placed in the casket in the home, or if the body was prepared in the undertaker's shop, it was brought back and kept in

the home until the funeral. Each night the casket was in the home some relatives or friends sat up all night beside the casket.

Today many of the old customs have been dropped. Services are conducted in such a way as to help us forget our sorrow as soon as possible. I believe it is a change for the better. We can in no way help the departed by making ourselves miserable for long periods of time.

FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS PER YEAR

In the year 1959 a few magazine articles told how a family, of two adults and three or four children, could live comfortably on a five-thousand dollar yearly income. Perhaps it would be hard to convince anyone that as late as 1910, father's large family lived on a cash outlay of five-hundred dollars per year.

The present day family lists such expenses as electric current, water, garbage disposal, fuel. Also the original cost of automobile, tires and car repair bills, gasoline and oil. In addition there are groceries, vacation expenses, tobacco, liquor, soft drinks, clothing, taxes, savings and others.

When I tell you how we lived, perhaps you will say, "You did not live. You just existed." I doubt if families of the present day get much more real enjoyment out of life than we did. True we put up with inconveniences that a present day family would never tolerate. We did have a lot of good fun. All thirteen children grew to adulthood. With a few exceptions, we were a pretty healthy bunch.

We had no electric power lines in our part of the country, hence no cost for electric current. Farm wells supplied water. Garbage disposal was no problem. Old newspapers could be burned, either in our stoves, or in a convenient place out of doors. Any scraps from the table went into the swill barrel for hog feed. Farm timber furnished fuel for both heating and cooking. The only other expense for fuel was fifty cents per month for five gallons of coal oil. This oil was used for our lamps and for starting fires in our stoves each morning.

Since horses furnished all our power for work and transportation, there was no expense for trucks or automobiles. When dad took his team to the blacksmith to have the horses shod, the smith did not find one dozen other things wrong with them.

We enjoyed holidays and picnics. I had a lot of fun playing, either alone or with neighbor boys. The children had a lot of fun in the kitchen on cold winter nights, popping corn, making fudge, molasses taffy or popcorn balls. On other nights we might sit near the big heating stove in the living room and play games. Our most common games were dominoes, checkers, nine-men-morris, authors or old maid. Some member of the family usually got a new book for Christmas. Several members of the family would read it. For several years we subscribed to the Youths' Companion magazine. We thoroughly enjoyed its stories.

Today men go on hunting trips and spend many dollars trying to have fun. We could go hunting on our own or our neighbor's farm most any time. Rabbit, quail, and squirrel were always plentiful. Father had some gentlemen friends near our county seat town. They sometimes came to our farm with hunting hounds. Father accompanied them on hunts for raccoon and wolf.

Most of the time we did not get very far from home on our vacations. A few times Mabel, Bertha, and I, (the three oldest children) spent a few days visiting our relatives near Beacon, about 10 miles from our home. Mother had a sister living near Sewal, in Wayne County, about fifty miles distance. Sometimes mother and some of the small children would visit there. They usually went on the train. Several different years, the sister, with her husband and family drove to visit us. They often came in a covered spring-wagon, drawn by a span of mules. They would take two days to make the trip each way.

In 1893 father took a trip by train to the World's Fair at Chicago. Both father and mother visited the World's Fair at St. Louis in 1904.

Our farm furnished a great deal of our food. In the early springtime, we went into the woods and picked wild onions, before we could grow onions in the garden. We picked wild dandelion, lettuce, lamb's quarter, and wild mustard for greens. A few days later we picked spar grass, (our name for asparagus), from a large bed in the yard. About the same time we pulled pie plant, or rhubarb, for pies and sauce.

As soon as the ground was warm and dry we planted radish and lettuce seeds, and set out onion sets. Later we planted peas, green beans, carrots, sweet corn, and set cabbage and tomato plants.

In June we picked gallons of wild gooseberries to make into pies and sauce. In July we found wild blackberries. Sometimes we got permission to pick the blackberries in our neighbor's pasture for a percentage of all we picked. Some years we grew strawberries, or secured some from our neighbors.

When I was quite small there were one or two apple trees on our farm. When they were destroyed by storms, father planted a new orchard of twenty-four trees, with several different varieties. When we did not have apples of our own we often got apples or Siberian crabs from mother's folks.

One year I came home from the local post office, where I went for our mail on Saturday night. While waiting for the mail to be distributed, I heard of a man, a few miles from us, who was trading apples for corn. Someone said he would trade one bushel of apples for one bushel of corn. On Monday morning father picked a thirty-two bushel load of corn. When he got the corn to the orchard, the orchardist said he had traded bushel for bushel with corn. Those apples were windfalls. He had no more of them, however, he had first quality, hand-picked apples he would trade, one bushel of apples for two bushels of corn. Father brought home sixteen bushels of good apples which we put into our cave. We ate apples all winter.

Some years, when we could not get apples, we would find wild crabapples in the pasture. We would pick several bushels of them. They made fine jelly. We could have all the walnuts, hickorynuts and hazelnuts we could use just for the work of gathering them.

Our farm was a manufacturing plant practically the year round. Apples and other fruits were canned for sauce, or made into butter, jams, and jellies. Apples and sweet corn were often dried on a platform in the sun. They were covered with mosquito netting to keep off insects. Tomatoes were canned by the bushel. When frost came the green tomatoes were picked and made into piccilili. We made sauerkraut by the fifty-gallon barrel.

One year the story got round our locality that there was a poisonous snake inside the cabbage heads. This snake was said to be so poisonous that if one snake were chopped up into a barrel of sauerkraut, the sauerkraut could poison a whole family. The snake was hard to see because it was about the size and color of a hair from a white horse's tail. That year we had a fine crop of cabbage. The folks said they could not afford to let all of it spoil. Father sharpened his spade and cleaned it well. Mother carefully examined every leaf of every head of cabbage, before dumping it into the barrel. Father chopped the cabbage with his spade. In making two fifty gallon barrels of sauerkraut they failed to find a single snake.

In the fall of 1959 I wrote the Des Moines Sunday Register and asked if anyone could give me any information about the cabbage snake story, which was circulating through Iowa sixty years ago. I intimated I thought the whole story was a hoax. I received between thirty and forty replies to my inquiry. Most of the writers said they had seen a cabbage snake. None of them proved it was poisonous.

About the time of the first frosts, in early October, mother would say we were getting short of meat and lard. Soon, some pleasant afternoon, we would get out the iron kettle. We filled it with water and built a fire under it, after we had hung it out of doors, a few inches off the ground. When the water was boiling, we would go to the pig pen and select a two or three hundred pound shote. We killed the pig with a rifle shot. After it was stuck and bled, the carcass was hauled to a platform. Here we had a large barrel standing nearly upright. We put the hot water into the barrel and dipped the pig into it to loosen the hair so it could be scraped off. The carcass was next hung, drawn, and left to cool for a while.

When the meat had been sufficiently cooled, it was cut into ham, shoulder, and fresh side meat. The heart, liver, splean, spare ribs and backbone were eaten fresh. The other meat was put into a wood barrel and salted enough to keep it until we could eat it. Most people we knew liked to pickle the pigs' feet. Father liked them fried. The head was cut into several pieces and boiled until all the meat fell from the bones. This meat was made into headcheese. All the fat was salvaged to make lard. Some of the lean meat was ground into sausage. This sausage was usually seasoned with dry sage leaf. I thought it tasted mighty good for breakfast on a cold morning.

About February father got one of the neighbors to help him do the butchering to provide meat for the summer. We would begin heating water soon after daybreak. As many as five, sometimes six, big hogs were butchered in one day.

For the next two or three days mother and father would be very busy. Father would cut out the hams, shoulders, and side meat. These pieces were packed into a salt brine in a wood barrel. They were left to cure for a few weeks before they could be smoked.

Large quantities of sausage, lard and head-cheese were made. Sometimes we had so much sausage mother feared it might spoil. She would make it into small cakes and fry it. The fried sausage cakes were packed into a large, stone jar. Melted lard was poured over the sausage until it was completely covered. This sausage could be kept for many weeks.

Several times I have seen the large, thirty gallon, Iron kettle filled with pieces of fat. These were cooked over a slow fire, out of doors, to make lard. The pieces of fat that did not all change to lard were called cracklings. We pressed them to squeeze out all the lard possible. Then the cracklings were put away in some kind of container until time to make soap.

When we used wood for fuel, in our stoves, we put the ashes into a wood barrel, standing on a slightly sloping platform. Small holes were bored in the bottom of the barrel so water could easily leak out. A few days before we were ready to make soap, the barrel was full of ashes, and we poured one gallon of water onto the top of them. We added a gallon of water to the ashes each day until the water, now a dark brown color, dripped out the bottom of the barrel, and ran into a cast iron boiler. This water, now called lye, was tested with a fresh egg. If it were strong enough to float the egg, it was right for soap making.

The cracklings were placed in the lye and cooked over a slow fire, out of doors. In a short time the mixture had turned into a heavy, dark brown liquid. This was soft soap. The only soap used in our laundry for several years.

After the soap making was done it was time to smoke the meat, put into brine at butchering time. The pieces of meat were hung on wood poles several feet above the smoke-house floor. A slow fire was built on the dirt floor of the smoke-house. Most of the time we used green, hickory wood for the fire. This smoke gave the meat a fine flavor, and also helped to preserve it. The house was closed up tightly. The smoking process continued for one week or more, until all the meat had a nice brown color.

The hams, shoulders, and bacon slabs were taken down, wrapped in heavy paper, and placed inside heavy muslin or grain sacks. Often these wrapped pieces were buried in oats in the oats bin. The meat kept well until late summer.

We would gladly have eaten more beef and not so much pork, but we had no refrigeration. We could not keep beef very long without it spoiling. Sometimes, in winter, we would kill a beef and sell part of it to a neighbor. Or we might buy a half or a quarter of beef from someone else. If the weather was so cold we could keep the beef frozen it would not spoil before we could eat it. There was no way we could cure beef like we did pork.

Sometimes, in summer, we would go to a butcher shop and buy a soup-bone. For fifty cents, we could buy a bone with enough meat on it to make a good meal for several people.

In those times a butcher would often give a customer pork or beef liver. Even as late as 1920, when we were living at Mapleton, Iowa, a butcher was laughing about a young bride who came in to buy beef liver. The lady ordered a quarter's worth. The butcher explained that a quarter's worth of liver would be so heavy she would have difficulty carrying it home.

During the winter months mother made hominy by boiling kernels of white corn in a weak lye solution to remove the hull of the grain. Next the grain was washed thoroughly, to remove the lye, and the grains were boiled until they swelled to about four times the normal size and became soft. At mealtime the hominy was reheated. We ate a lot of it each winter.

We took shelled corn to the miller and had it ground into whole grain corn meal. This meal made excellent mush which was eaten warm, with milk, or cooled and fried. Mother made very good corn bread from this meal. Some cold, winter days I worked in the timber, helping father get fire wood. At noon on such days mother might serve corn bread, stewed soup beans and fresh pork. I thought if there was anything better to eat in the world, I could not imagine what it would be.

We tried to grow enough potatoes and turnips to supply our needs. Sometimes we ran short. Then we depended rather heavily upon soup beans or hominy for replacement.

We drank milk at nearly every meal, unless we were short, as we sometimes were in cold weather. We nearly always had plenty of milk the other three seasons of the year. We made large quantities of cottage cheese.

If we had plenty of cream we would dump it into a large wood or stone dash churn. I have spent many hours moving the dash of the churn, up and down. I

watched the color on the dash to determine when the butter had come. Then I could run and play. There were times we did not have much cream. Then we would pour three pints of cream into a half gallon jar. We would seal the lid on the jar and then shake it back and forth until butter was formed.

Many present day families spend plenty of cash for different kinds of soft drinks. Good, home-made buttermilk was delightfully refreshing, when cooled by hanging a jug of it down in the well. If I could have it now, I would not trade it for all the soft drinks I have ever known.

We often bought fresh lemons in hot weather and made cool lemonade with water drawn fresh from the well. We sometimes borrowed an ice cream freezer from some of our relatives. We made several gallons of ice cream, using eggs, whole milk and plenty of sugar. None of us children used tea or coffee when I was home. Mother and father might drink coffee for breakfast. Neither of them were heavy coffee drinkers.

Father did not use tobacco in any form. He said that when a young man he learned to smoke cigars. He always noticed a bad taste in his mouth the next morning after smoking. So he decided he was a fool to smoke at all. During the twenty years I was at home I never knew him to spend one cent for intoxicating liquor to be used as a beverage.

Because of all the food we got from the farm, we did not have heavy grocery bills. We used lots of sugar. It was usually bought by the one-hundred pound sack. We sometimes bought it for $5.00 per sack. A few times it was bought for less than that. We usually bought flour, three or four 49-pound sacks at a time. We have bought it for as little as 98 cents per sack. Father often bought coarse ground, whole wheat flour. Sometimes this flour was baked into bread. More often it was cooked as a breakfast cereal. All our bread, rolls, baking powder biscuits, pies and cakes were baked at home. There was no chance to buy biscuit and cake mixes in those days. Either a housewife was good at baking or she was not.

Most all the clothing, worn by mother and my sisters, was made at home. The sewing was done on a treadle sewing machine or by hand. Calico could be bought as low as ten cents per yard. Gingham usually cost a little more. All of us wore woolen underwear in winter. Sometimes it was red flannel which mother had sewed into a garment. It might be knitwear, bought from the store. In the fall father bought several yards of heavy outing flannel. From this mother made mittens for father and the boys. If the day was very cold each one of us wore two pairs of these cotton mittens.

I almost forgot to mention that one of our biggest family expenses was for footwear. As soon as the sun began to shine hot in the spring, I and the other children would begin to watch the therometer. About as soon as it registered 75-OF, we ran to father and asked, "Can we take our shoes off?" The first time we asked we might be told to wait a few days. Some day the thermometer registered 80-OF, and the heat became unbearable. We begged so hard that father said, "You may take them off for one half hour". We were barefoot in nothing flat. But our feet were so tender that we were ready to put the shoes on again at the end of the half hour. But in a few days we put the shoes away for the summer. We did not wear them again until frost came, unless we were going someplace where it was more proper to wear shoes.

Some of the first shoes I had were high top button shoes. Mother and the girls also wore high top button shoes. When we were all getting dressed in the mornings

we used three or four button hooks at the same time.

"The copper-toed beauties, The bright red-top treasures,
The first pair of boots, That I wore when a boy."

I do not know the author of this little verse, but it very well describes the first pair of boots I had when about six or seven years old. I was proud of those boots. Father wore a pair of high top leather boots and he and I both used the same boot-jack when we pulled them off.

Perhaps father would make two or three trips to our county seat town, Oskaloosa, Iowa, each winter. Every time, before he started on one of these trips, all the children were rounded up for shoe inspection. Most of the time there were several pairs of shoes needing stitching, half-soleing, or buttons. These were taken to the shoe cobbler that day. Sometimes one or two children would have shoes that were not worth repairing. These kids might get to ride to town and get a new pair of shoes. Often someone had overshoes that leaked. A new pair would have to be bought. It was fun to run on ice or snow and then slide for several feet, but it was hard on shoes. Our parents tried to keep us from doing such sliding. But kids are always kids.

With a large family there was a great deal of work keeping each one supplied with clean clothing. For a few years mother boiled the clothes and then rubbed them on a washboard. About as soon as hand power washing machines came on the market, we bought one. For several years father, or I, turned the lever back and forth on the dolly type machine, to wash the clothes. Mother rinsed them and hung them to dry. The greater part of one half day was required each week to do the washing.

The only place we could dry the clothes was on clothes lines out of doors. In cold weather the clothes would freeze to the line. A union suit of underwear might billow out in the wind and freeze. It looked almost like a headless man was hanging on the line. All the ironing was done with sad irons which had to be heated on top of the kitchen range.

An extra job in the springtime was caring for the hens and young chicks. Some day, when mother went to gather the eggs, she would find some hens acting cross. She would let them sit on the nest for a day or two. Then she would put them into a nest where they could be shut up, so they would not be disturbed by other hens. One dozen eggs would be placed under each hen, and she was supposed to settle down and sit quietly for three weeks. One or two times each day the hen got off the nest and took feed and water. This time allowed the eggs to air and cool. After a few minutes the hen would jump back and settle down over the eggs. I have seen hens turning the eggs over with their beaks. This turning helped the eggs to hatch in a normal way.

After three weeks of careful brooding a dozen chicks might break open the shells and begin to cheep. The hen and her brood would be taken into the yard and assigned to an individual coop. The hen was tied, by one leg, to the coop for a day or two until the chicks were strong enough to follow her about the yard. They picked up worms, bugs, and grasshoppers the hen found for them. If a sudden shower came up the hen would call cluck, cluck, cluck, and the chicks would quickly take shelter under her wings until the shower had passed. The hen would always lead her brood back to the coop at nightfall. Then someone would have to see that each brood was shut inside a coop. Unprotected, the chicks might be destroyed by rats or other predatory animals.

When the chicks were about half grown they might be caught in a sudden shower.

By that time they were too big to be protected by the hen, and they were sometimes drowned or chilled to death. Often we have gone out, during or after a shower, and picked up a bushel basket full of half dead chicks. We put them into the warm oven of the kitchen range until they were warm, dry and thoroughly revived. In a few more days these birds supplied our table with delicious, fried chicken.

Sometimes hens were set on duck, goose, or guiena eggs. Birds hatched from these eggs gave us special holiday dinners. The geese and ducks also furnished us feathers for pillows.

When farm prices were low it was difficult to get hold of enough money to pay our farm taxes. But they usually got paid on time so there was no penalty for being late. One time father received a letter from the county treasurer stating his farm would be sold for taxes, if delinquent taxes were not paid by a certain date. He was always very careful to keep all receipts. He gathered up his tax receipts and soon proved to the county treasurer that the letter was a mistake.

As fast as possible father paid off the mortgage on the one hundred and twenty acre farm. During World War I, with four of his five sons in uniform, he was able to buy some government bonds to further the cause of his country.

LAURA MABEL MOTT

The first of the baker's dozen was born on Grandmother Plum's farm, a short distance from Beacon, Iowa, October 29, 1883. At that time father and mother were living with Grandmother Plum. This child, named Laura Mabel Mott was the only child of the thirteen who was not born in the farm house in Jefferson township.

She was six when mother died and eight when father married the second time. She attended school in the rural districts until she was about fifteen. At that time she was reading from the Fifth reader and solving most of the problems in White's arithmetic.

When about sixteen she left home to work for Aunt Mary Pilgrim. She was there for a number of years. She worked a number of seasons at the canning factory in Oskaloosa, helping can tomatoes. Later on she worked as a cook and maid for the George Ross family, who were running a boarding house and livery stable in Buxton, Iowa.

On August 17, 1909, she married our step-mother's brother, Sam Stroud. It used to worry us for a while trying to figure out what relation Mabel and Sam's children would be to the rest of us. We never got the problem solved, as they never had any children. They lived together for thirty years. Sam died suddenly of a heart attack, in John Elder's pasture, in the autumn of 1939.

A short time after they were married they moved to Kansas City, Kansas. For a number of years Sam was superintendent of the feed department of the Kansas City, Missouri, stockyards. Sisters Pearl and Myrtle, and Bertha's daughter, Wilma Elder, all made their home with Mabel at different periods of time. While living there they attended Business College, or worked as secretaries for business firms. Some of them worked as telephone operators. Wilma worked for some time in the catalog department of Sears, Roebuck and Company.

Sam has been dead for more than twenty years now. Mabel lived with her sister, Nora Martin, for several years until Nora's death, October 29, 1952. Since then she has made her home part of the time with her sister, Ruth.

She has always been kind-hearted to all her brothers and sisters. She was always looking out for me when I was small, just like an older sister should. She used to call me grandpa and tell me I did not have enough ambition to go to a party and have a little fun. No doubt her pushing helped me to put forth a little more effort. When I heard I might have a chance to go to school at the Oskaloosa College Academy, I made up my mind she would not know any of my plans until I was enrolled in classes. I wanted to show her I did have a little Git up and Git.

Mabel worked at a cafeteria in Kansas City, Missouri, until her seventy-sixth birthday. Then she resigned and came to Chariton where she formed a partnership with Bertha and bought a house. She was busy for a time getting moved into the new house and getting settled. Soon she became restless. She applied for work as a nurse's assistant at the Baker Nursing Home in Chariton. Now, nearing the age of seventy-seven years, she is working several days per week at the nursing home. For years her philosophy has been, "It is much better to wear out than to rust out".

She took a great deal of interest in church work while in Kansas City. She has always liked flowers. She has set out a number of perennials, and seeded several annual flowers in her yard this season.

BERTHA VIOLA MOTT

If a farm boy cannot be born twins, or have a brother about his own age, the next best thing is to have a sister. Bertha was just two years and one week older than I. Although she had to work in the house, and sometimes liked to entertain girl friends, when I was not welcome, she often played with me.

We spent hours together picking wild gooseberries, or blackberries, picking wild flowers or wild onions from our woods. We often went horse-back riding. In the fall we gathered hazelnuts, hickorynuts and walnuts. We often jumped rope, rolled hoops, or went coasting. We rode a teeter-totter for hours at a time. We walked together to and from the country school.

Sometimes the morning-glories got rather thick in our corn fields. Then father would call Bertha and I to follow his cultivator and pull the vines from the stalks of corn. One day when we were working in the cornfield, and waiting for father to come past with his cultivator, a large spreading vipor snake crawled along the ground, a short distance from us.

Father had no use for a snake of any kind. He taught us to kill every one we found. We had heard that the spreading vipor was very poisonous. We tried to kill the snake by pelting it with clods of dirt. When father came we had thrown so many clods at the snake that he was buried. We told father where the snake was. He dug the snake out and killed it by cutting it into with his jackknife.

Our old Plano grain binder did not have a bundle carrier attachment. Whenever father started cutting oats he depended upon the children to carry the bundles and pile them so he could set them into shocks later. Bertha and I worked together a good many hours carrying oat bundles.

Before John Elder came into our community Bertha and I often went to church or social functions together. The first time we saw John was when he came down from Des Moines to visit his scotch grandfather, Mr. Greenfield, who lived about one-fourth mile from our house. One Sunday mother invited Mr. Greenfield and John to take dinner with us. Mother killed a big, fat hen. She stewed the hen and made noodles.

John had been batching with his grandfather for several days. He seemed to be pretty hungry that day. When he went home the old scotchman said, "My God, Mon! Ain't ye never ad any noodles before?"

A year or two later, John came to our house in late winter and said he would like to get a job as a farm hand. I took him over and introduced him to our neighbor John C. Ross. He went to work for Mr. Ross and worked for him for several months.

A few days after John went to work for Mr. Ross, Bertha was called to help Mrs. Ross with cooking and housework. Bertha and John soon got acquainted. During the next two years John worked for several different farmers, and Bertha worked as a housemaid for Mrs. Lee Hunter and others.

When Bertha was home on Sunday evenings, John would come calling. As soon as we could clear away the supper dishes, all the family would retire to the living room. The kitchen door would be shut and Bertha would entertain her young man near the kitchen range. Sometimes I would be out at Christian Endeavor on Sunday evening. When I got home I would have to knock on the kitchen door and have John

unlock and let me in. Of course I went to bed as soon as possible after I got home.

On January 16, 1907, John and Bertha were married. After a few day's visit with John's parents in Des Moines, this couple moved to Buxton, Iowa, where John had a job driving a mule team, hauling supplies for the big company store. On this job, John often drove a hearse for Negro funerals.

Bertha's first baby was born November 20, 1908. She was named Verla. In August of 1909 the family moved to Des Moines. John went to work for the city gas company. For a short time John and his brother, Albert, operated a grocery store in Des Moines.

In January of 1912, the family moved to a house on the Jud Kerr farm east of Buxton and John got a job firing steam boilers at one of the mines of the Consolidated Coal Company. At that time John said he never got tired. He walked several miles each day to get to and from work. He would put in a twelve hour shift as fireman and then he might work two shifts straight before going home for rest.

Later on he took the examination for a steam engineer's state license. He worked for some years as hoisting engineer at No. 4 coal mine near Chariton.

For a while the family lived in Chariton. Later they bought a small farm, a few miles northeast of Chariton. Here they lived until both Bertha and John found it too difficult to climb over the steep hills and take care of livestock.

Ralph was born August 10, 1912. Wilma was born January 5, 1914, and Harold was born October 4, 1916. The first three children grew to adulthood but Harold died in just a few weeks on November 24, 1916. A few days after the funeral, Bertha wrote me and said, "How empty my arms feel without my little boy".

While working as a hoisting engineer, John became broken in health. He was forced to give up his work. He took treatments at the University Hospital at Iowa City and at Excelsior Springs, Missouri. He received some temporary relief, but for twenty years he was practically an invalid. He died March 3, 1953, at the age of seventy-two.

After the children were grown, Bertha began to take in odd jobs, such as cleaning woman, temporary cook and baby sitter. At the same time she kept up her house, which they bought on Fifth Street in Chariton when they sold their farm.

Soon other troubles were to come. In the summer of 1948, Wilma, now Mrs. Ivan Gardner, and the mother of two children, started to walk across the floor, carrying her young daughter in her arms when she fell. From that time on she has never walked normally. She became a polio victim and lost the use of both legs. The only way she can walk now is to wear heavy metal braces on both legs and use crutches.

When in her kitchen she has to lean against a sink or table while she stands to do her work. Most of the time she moves about the house in a wheel chair. She has a car which has been fitted with hand controls. She showed me once how she could drive through some of the heaviest traffic in Kansas City with that car. She remarked, "When I am behind this wheel I feel equal to anyone".

When Wilma first contracted polio her mother-in-law came to take care of her house and family. In February, 1949, Bertha and John went to live with the Gardner family. They were there twenty-two months. Bertha took care of the house and John

did some garden work. At the end of their stay, Wilma was getting adjusted to her handicap so she could do the cooking and other work about the house. Bertha and John returned to their home in Chariton.

Bertha spent two or three years in Oskaloosa after John's death, working as a housemaid for two or three different families. Then she returned to Chariton and lived alone in the house on Fifth Street until December of 1959. Sister Mabel retired from her work at a cafeteria in Kansas City in the fall of 1959. She came to Chariton and the two widows formed a partnership and bought a house at 1207 Braden Avenue in Chariton. Here they live together. Bertha still takes in odd jobs, as baby sitter or maid. Mabel works part time at the Baker Nursing Home. Both the girls are interested in their garden and flowers. They have a very nice appearing lawn this summer of 1960.

NORA GRACE MOTT

When we think of any large family we cannot help being impressed with the way the different members of that family are effected by the fortunes of life. Out of the thirteen children of my father's family, one seemed destined to be very unfortunate.

Nora was the first child of father's second marriage. She was born November 15, 1892. I was not quite five years old. I remember waking one morning and finding myself in bed with my two older sisters. Our bed was in the kitchen. The door to the living room was closed. Soon we heard a noise which we thought was made by a cat outside the house. A few minutes later father came into our room and told us we had a baby sister. We realized later that the cat we heard was the cry of the new baby.

When she was only a few months old, Mabel, Bertha, and I got scarlet fever. The baby also got it. The rest of us recovered with little difficulty, but Nora got some kind of gathering in her throat and the doctor had to lance it. Nora never seemed to be as strong as the other children. For several years she was troubled with poor eyes. Father spent a lot of time, and quite a little money, having her eyes treated. She always seemed to have some special throat trouble.

I began teaching at the Brock school house, a few miles east and north of Bussey, Iowa, in September, 1910. After a few weeks I put on a box social at the school, one Friday evening.

It was customary at that time for each young lady, who attended the social, to bring a cardboard box filled with lunch for two. The box could be decorated in any way that suited the lady's fancy. The young men, at this affair, were supposed to bid at auction on the box each one wished to buy. The boys were not supposed to know whose box was being sold until it was bought and paid for. Then it could be opened and the name of the lady would be found inside. Sometimes, in order to make sure the lady would eat with her regular beau, she might decorate the box in a certain way and tell her beau what the box looked like before the bidding started. If other young men suspected a man was quite anxious to buy a certain box, they would bid up the price and make him pay dearly for the privilege of eating with his steady.

Nora came to my box social and brought a box. One of the boys in my grade school bought it. I was boarding with Arthur Martin's family that winter. Arthur bought a box belonging to one of my grade school girls. He made a trade with the boy who bought Nora's box. In this way Arthur and Nora met for the first time. Almost immediately the courtship began. They were married February 17, 1912.

For one year they lived on a rented farm. Both became dissatisfied with farm life, so they began to look around for other means of livelihood. Sam and Mabel Stroud had lived in Kansas City for a number of years and Nora and Arthur decided to move down there.

For a while they lived in a house near the Strouds. Later they moved to the part of Kansas City, Kansas, known as Queen's Gardens. Here they had room to have a big garden and raise tame rabbits. Arthur worked for a printing company in Kansas City, Missouri, and commuted to work by street car.

Two little girls came to their home. The oldest was named Vera and the youngest was Eunice. After a few years the family moved to another house, situated

on what was then highway No. 40.

Vera had been going to school for a few years when Eunice started to attend another school. One evening one of the neighbor ladies brought Eunice home in her car. It happened, when the lady stopped her car in front of Nora's house, that Eunice stepped out of the car just in time to be struck and killed by a car which was coming up from behind. This tragedy occurred November 17, 1925. It was a terrible shock to Nora, Vera and Arthur.

Arthur died of a kidney ailment in 1933. A short time after his death, Nora sold the house where they were living and moved to another house on Mills Street in Kansas City, Kansas. Here Nora and Vera lived for some years and made a living by taking in washings and ironings. They also established a regular business in the sale of home-made bread, rolls, cinnamon rolls and cookies.

Vera graduated from high school the same year Arthur died. She seemed to have quite a little musical talent, but she developed epileptic seizures. She spent the last twelve, or more years of her life in a special institution in another city of Kansas.

Nora continued to live in the house on Mills Street for two or three years after Vera went away. Then she sold her house and bought a bigger one on Wood Avenue, Kansas City, Kansas. When she did not have the kitchen cabinets and closets she wanted, she took carpenter tools and made them. Sister Mabel tells me Nora was a very good cabinet maker. This house was large enough that Nora rented two or more apartments. Sister Mabel lived in one of them for several years until Nora's death.

Sometime before Arthur died Nora began to have trouble with her hearing. She bought a hearing aid and later had a special ear operation, but for several years she was totally deaf. In addition to the loss of hearing she lost the sight of one eye. For some time she suffered much from arthritis. Death came suddenly, from a heart attack, on the evening of October 29, 1952. She lacked less than one month of being sixty years old.

In spite of all her troubles, those who knew her best said she never seemed to complain about her lot, but remained cheerful until the last. One of her hobbies was making a collection of "hot holders".

The superintendent of the institution where Vera was living was notified of Nora's death. He stated Vera was not in physical condition to attend her mother's funeral. In 1955, Vera died at the age of forty-two. This ended the lives of a most unfortunate family. The family owned a three grave burial lot in the cemetery. Since it was filled by the first to go, Vera had to be buried in another cemetery, in a different part of the city.

ZIBA DALE MOTT

The early part of March, 1894, was quite mild and pleasant. The fields were dry and in fine shape for cultivation. Father took advantage of these conditions to get most of his oat crop seeded. On the morning of the twenty-first, the temperature had dropped way below freezing. There was a strong wind from the northwest. The temperature remained so low for several days that father had to reseed a good part of the oats field.

On that cold, blustery morning, Ziba Dale was born. It seems now the weather that morning almost foretold the life of that baby boy. His was a life of action, quick decisions, a number of triumphs, and defeat by early death.

Almost from the start he seemed to be the kind of individual who could look out for himself. He had just barely learned to walk and talk when Grandmother Plum came to visit us. Once or twice the baby fell down and grandmother said, "O! O! Jump up. Don't cry." When he fell, a short time later, grandmother was amused to hear him say, "O! O! Jump up. Don't cry." A few months later he learned to play that empty spools were his horses. One day mother caught him unwinding a spool of thread and saying, "I'll soon have a new mare." Mother grabbed the spool and Ziba did not get the new mare for a few days.

When I came home from school, one cold winter day, Ziba met me at the door and said, "Poppy hit me in the head with the ax today". Father had been working, just outside the kitchen door, repairing the old wood sled he used for hauling barrels of water. He had taken a single bitted ax and was swinging it to use the blunt end as a hammer to knock the old sled to pieces. He had no idea any of the children were outside the house until Ziba opened the kitchen door, just in time to be struck in the head with the sharp end of the ax. He was lucky the ax was one used for chopping ice and not sharp enough to cut wood, also he was far away from father that he was struck very lightly. However, there was a scar left on the boy's forehead for several years.

During the first three years mother dressed Ziba in a dress and he wore the most beautiful, long, yellow curls. It was a little hard to cut those curls and let him become a real boy.

The first fall he started to school he was going bare-footed. The floor of the school house was of hard pine and had many splinters. In just a few days Ziba complained that one of his feet hurt. The folks looked at his foot very carefully but found nothing wrong. Two or three weeks later, after the foot had swelled quite a little, a wood aplinter two or three inches long came out of the botton of the foot.

It seemed to me he got hurt, or sick, more often than any other member of the family. Whenever we had some new kind of food he was apt to overeat and get sick, as he did when he ate two dozen eggs on Easter Sunday, or when he ate too much comb honey the day we cut the first bee tree.

One year he had measles in January. He went to work at a new location and here the family had just recovered from measles, so he took measles again. He had measles twice in a period of three months.

He sometimes got hurt because his judgment was not good. One day he was out at the wood pile chopping wood. He thought his younger brother, Wesley, could help him, so he said, "Wesley, I will tie a string onto the end of this ax handle.

When I strike, you pull the string. Then I can strike harder". When they tried the experiment, the ax fell not on the stick of wood but on Ziba's bare foot and nearly split off his big toe, One day in early March he went wading in the creek and caught such a cold he was so hoarse he could hardly talk for two or three days.

A few years later Ziba and I went to play with our neighbor boys. We took the tongue out of an old buggy. We got into the buggy and started it rolling downhill while we tried to guide it with a pair of leather straps. The buggy tipped over and Ziba was thrown to the ground with one leg between the spokes of the buggy wheel. He was lucky he did not get a broken leg.

Both he and Wesley were very active and self-reliant. When they were told it would be their job to keep water pumped for the cattle at the bottom well, they went down there every day, but since the swimming hole in the creek was only a few yards from the well, both of them were pretty good swimmers before the folks knew they were going into the water. One fall they were still going swimming after we had had several frosty mornings.

Everything Ziba touched seemed to turn into money. When he was just a small boy father had a baby pig with an injured foot. Ziba asked to have the pig for his own. He took such good care of that pig that it weighed more than two hundred pounds in a few months and sold well on the market.

Whenever we had a chance to work at piece-work wages, he always worked as hard and fast as he could, so he could make more money per day. He was quite young when he took a job cutting corn fodder with a corn knife at so many cents per shock. He made money faster than some grown men could do. Other members of the family tell me that after he was grown, he picked one hundred bushels of corn by hand in one day. That was a difficult feat in the days before hybrid corn.

When he was about nineteen or twenty he took an examination for a state steam engineer's license and made the grade the first try. He attended Highland Park College for a twelve week's short course in mechanical engineering. A short time before he moved to Wyoming, he had so much experience as a carpenter that he was drawing ninety cents per hour, top wages for a carpenter in that time.

One or two winters he operated a drift coal mine on the home farm. He, with father's help and advise, sunk an air shaft, about eight feet in diameter and more than thirty feet deep. When one of his miners, who was a big fellow, wanted to pick a fight with another miner, who was much smaller, Ziba told him, "If you want to fight you will have to lick me first." There was no further trouble.

During his boyhood he had had many fights with the boys from the coal camp at White City. He soon learned to take care of himself. He would not stand by and see a bully beat up a smaller man.

One winter he rented an old building at White City and operated a roller skating rink, for several weeks.

During the fall of 1917, he joined the U. S. Army. He went overseas in early spring. He saw sharp action on the Marne, at St. Mehiel and Belleau-wood.

Three days before the signing of the Armistice he contracted pneumonia. Many men were being carried to the hospitals because of wounds received at the

front lines. Sick men must wait. After three days on a sick bed, he was taken to the hospital. His normal weight was around one hundred and sixty-five. Before he left the hospital he weighed one hundred and ten. However, he was discharged in the summer of 1919 without physical disability.

He came home and enjoyed driving his mare, Nellie, hitched to the top buggy, and driving his runabout Ford. In a few months, he got a chance to file a claim for homestead land near Dixon, Wyoming.

He married Callie Harding on February 2, 1921. The two spent that summer on the homestead claim. They returned to Iowa for the winter and went back to Wyoming the next spring.

They were improving the place and they expected to prove up and get full possession on the claim the following December. While working in a hayfield Ziba sustained an injury to his knee joint. This injury caused a septisemic infection to spread through his system, and resulted in his death a few days later.

Callie notified father who went out there by train and helped return the body for burial in the Eddyville cemetery. On the stone the date of death is given as September 20, 1922. His strenuous life had ended in a little more than twenty-eight and one half years.

He was the first of the "Baker's Dozen" to quit. At his funeral I tried to express our thoughts in the following lines:

<u>My Brother</u>

He died for the sake of his country
E'er he reached the noon-day of life.
A brave and daring soldier worn out
By the toil and the strife.

Upon the Marne; at St. Mehiel
Through Belleau-wood and dell,
Mid gas and bombs and bayonets
He braved a living hell.

His comrades fell about him,
But from duty he did not quail.
He rated his own life as nothing
If only the Cause might prevail.

But after the fighting was ended
And the last big gun had been stilled,
For many weeks our brother
A soldier's sick bed filled.

Exhausted by forced exposure
To disease he had to yield.
Still his dauntless spirit
Brought him home from the foreign field.

Slowly his health regaining,
Our brother could not rest.
Alone with his wife he conquered,
A home from the Virgin West.

And now he is dead as you tell me.
I refuse to believe it is so,
For that dauntless soldier spirit
Defeat could never know.

Somewhere beyond our vision,
His spirit shall carry on,
With Truth and Right his commanders
Until their cause be won.

WESLEY HOMER MOTT

Child number six was born December 14, 1895. He was named Wesley Homer. He was a strong, active boy from the start. One morning, when he was about nine months old, he awoke crying. Mother was busy getting breakfast. I picked the baby up and carried him to the kitchen range, where there was a good fire burning. I did not realize I was holding him too close to the stove until he began to cry very loudly. Mother said, "Why, you are burning his feet". She took him from me and began to treat burns on the bottom of his feet. These burns were so severe that they left permanent scars.

I was very, very sorry because I had hurt my little brother, but nothing I could ever do would make his feet like they were before. That experience taught me to be very careful that no one else might suffer due to my carelessness.

As there was only about eighteen months difference in Wesley's and Ziba's ages they did not have to be lonesome, as I had been. Each one was company for the other. Together, they planned and carried out many boyish pranks that one could hardly do alone.

I was nearly twenty years old when I left home. Ziba was past thirteen and Wesley was nearly twelve. From that time on both the boys took over the work I had previously done on the farm. Both were strong and quick to learn.

When about seventeen Wesley worked for a while on the railroad section. Some older man tried to get him to drink intoxicating liquor. Wesley refused. When the bully threatened to force him to drink, Wesley told him to come on and see if he was man enough to do it. The bully thought better of it and did not carry out his threat.

On February 8, 1915, Wesley became a member of the Iowa National Guard. He enlisted at Oskaloosa in Co. F. 54th. Iowa Infantry. He attended training camp with the Guard that summer for a two-weeks period.

July 6, 1916, his company was inducted into Federal service, with Company H. 3rd. Iowa Infantry. The federal troops were soon sent to Brownsville, Texas, where they spent several months because of the Mexican border trouble.

September 1, 1916, Wesley was given the rank of sergeant. His company was discharged from federal service at Fort Des Moines, Iowa, in March of 1917.

On July 15, of that same year, his company was recalled to federal service, and he was given the rank of first sergeant. The 3rd. Iowa Infantry became the 168th. Infantry of the 42nd. Division, and moved to Camp Mills, Long Island, N. Y. They left for overseas service, as part of the Rainbow Division, November 14, 1917.

Between that time and the next April his company saw action in the Luneville Sector, Lorraine, France. He was transferred to officer's candidate training school at Langers, France, April 1, 1918. July 9, 1918, he was discharged to accept a commission as 2nd. Lieutenant, Infantry National Army. He was assigned to the 29th. Division, 116th. Infantry. He joined that outfit July 22, 1918, at Belfort Alsace, France.

As a commissioned officer he saw service in the center sector Haute Alsace, France. He was also in the Meuse Argonne offensive. He was never wounded in any

engagement, but one night the trench, where he was in command, was heavily shelled. Two different times that night a shell exploded so close to him that the concussion knocked him off his feet.

At one time he was in trenches, near the front lines, for three weeks straight before he was allowed to go back to rest camp. During that three weeks he was lucky to get as many as three or four hours sleep per day.

He was discharged at Camp Lee, Virginia, May 29, 1919, after eighteen months and nine days overseas service. He was in the Officer's Reserve Corps for about one year after discharge. He resigned in 1920, after all his uniforms and equipment were stolen.

Many of the boys who came back alive, and seemingly without wounds or scars, were not able to easily re-adjust to civilian life. They had witnessed scenes they could not readily erase from their minds. They had endured hardships far beyond anything a civilian is normally required to do. No wonder it took some of them months, or even years, to get adjusted to normal living. Wesley was very nervous and restless. He went to Idaho, and in that mountain country he found some peace, while working as a sheep herder.

There with a large flock of sheep, a well trained dog, and a covered wagon, he spent many weeks in solitude. He spent one or two winters living in a small cabin in the woods. He did his own cooking and became rather expert in the making of sour dough biscuits and flap-jacks. He chopped enough wood to keep his cabin warm and spent the rest of the time reading and sleeping. Often, he viewed the grandeur of the high mountain peaks, as did the psalmist who said, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help."

During those times he was doing a great deal of reading. One day the owner of a good saddle horse heard that Wesley could shoe horses. He brought his horse to Wesley and was well satisfied with the way the horse was shod. When he asked what the charge would be, Wesley said he did not care to take any cash, but he added, "I understand you have a good private library. Would you mind if I borrow some of your books? I like to read." The man assured him he was welcome to read anything in his library. Wesley borrowed a number of books. He sometimes spent an entire night reading. Today he is a well read man and can converse readily on many topics.

On September 20, 1939, he married Margaret Wills, a widow who had one child of her own and three step-children by a previous marriage. His marriage gave him the steadying influence he needed. To quote from one of his recent letters, "I lived happy ever after."

He is highly regarded in Kooskia, Idaho, where he has made his home for most of his married life. He served as Commander of the American Legion Post 79, Department of Idaho in the year 1934-35. He has been service officer and adjutant of that post nearly ever since. In his work as service officer he has helped many of his buddies and other ex-servicemen apply for government aid of various kinds.

At one time a large forest fire was raging in the Idaho forests. Wesley was in command of a camp of about two hundred fire fighters for several days until the fire was brought under control.

During World War II he worked in the U. S. Navy ship yards in the state

of Washington for several months. After the war he worked for a time as carpenter or repairman for one of the big lumber mills, near his home.

One day he walked under a heavy chain conveyer just at the instant that the chain broke and struck him in the back with such force that he was taken home unconscious. He has never completely recovered from that injury.

Once he was bitten by a tick and contracted Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. He was in the hospital for several weeks before he recovered.

He was Justice of Peace in the Clearwater precinct, Idaho county, Idaho for eight and one half years. He refused to again be candidate for that office. During his time as Justice of Peace, he performed nine different marriages.

He has acted as guide for hunting parties, seeking deer and elk in the mountains, and for fishing parties on the river. He enjoys fishing for steel-head salmon, in the river close to his home.

I visited him for about four days, at his home, in June of 1950. When I left I tried to put into verse my impressions of the valley where his home is located.

<u>Vacation Land</u>

There's a little house in the valley,
Nestled beneath the pines,
By towering hilltops surrounded,
And the river playing it's chimes.

There's honeysuckle, spirea, locust
And roses all a-bloom.
The graceful weeping willow
Nigh to the Scotchman's broom.

The trout that leap in the river,
The birds that sing on the hill,
The wrens, the swallows, the robins,
All bid me to rest at will.

To my gracious host and hostess
I truly want you to know
I had a splendid vacation
In your state of Idaho.

Wesley and Margaret came to visit us in the spring of 1953. It happened that while he was here the members of his old National Guard Company held a reunion and banquet in Oskaloosa. He attended and enjoyed meeting his old buddies, some of them he had not seen since he received his officer's commission in France.

While they were here, Margaret said she missed the protection of the mountains while on these Iowa prairies. Both she and Wesley enjoy the little valley, where they live, completely surrounded by mountains. No tornado can ever strike them. Their winter temperature is more mild than that of Iowa. All the cold winds are broken by the mountains and a lot of heat is released by the river, which flows only a few rods from their house. In this valley they are content, as they spend their declining years.

IDA PEARL MOTT

Child number 7, a girl, was born September 9, 1897. She was the girl who had lots of ambition and a desire to make a life that was worthwhile.

At the age of 14, she had passed the eighth grade county examination. This qualified her to enter high school. The nearest high school at that time was in Bussey, seven miles away. In order to attend high school she would have to live in Bussey, at least during the week. The folks would also have to pay her tuition. At that time the local township was responsible only for supplying a pupil with eight grades of schooling.

Pearl desired to go to high school very much, but the folks did not think they could stand the expense. A little later she tried to enter nurse's training at the Oskaloosa Hospital, but she was denied that privilege because she was not a high school graduate.

While she was still attending grade school, at the age of thirteen, she won the Mahaska County grade spelling contest and took home a cash prize of $10.00. She took care of that money and added to it what she could. When about eighteen or nineteen she went to Kansas City. She lived with sister Mabel for one year while she attended the Ransomarian Business College of Kansas City, Missouri.

At the college she studied typing, bookkeeping, spelling, arithmetic, commercial law and stenography. After taking the one year course she secured work as file clerk with Sherman Williams Paint Company in Kansas City. Later she worked as stenographer and typist for the Royal Baking Company.

On March 1, 1921, she married William Thomas, a boy who grew up near the White City coal camp. From the time of their marriage until his death, March 13, 1936, they lived on a farm that had belonged to Willie's father. Their land bordered father's farm on the north. Two boys, Keith and Dale, and one girl, Aileen, were born to this family.

With the oldest child scarcely in his teens, when her husband died, she took over the supervision of the farm and managed it until she sold it in 1945. By that time her children were grown.

She bought a house in Oskaloosa and moved there. Her son, Dale, lived with her a few years before he went to Oregon and married. After she was about fifty years old she decided she wanted to learn to paint on canvas. She took a few lessons from a special instructor and began painting. She exhibited a few pictures at the Mahaska County Fair. She has painted a number of landscapes and water scenes. She has a nice collection of her work in her home. She has also given a number of pictures to her sisters and other people.

She seemed to have so much energy that she was doing a number of things at once. She worked for some time at the factory of General Mills in her city. She spent a number of months as a special maid and nurse for an elderly lady. In addition she was a Gray Lady, making frequent trips to the Veteran's Hospital at Knoxville, Iowa. The work of the Gray Ladies was a strictly volunteer service. On their trips to the hospital, they did various things to assist in making the lives of the hospitalized veterans more pleasant. Some days they might write a number of letters for the men. They brought magazines and other reading material to the patients. Sometimes they assisted in therapy. They might read to someone who could not read for himself. They might play cards with others.

In addition to her other work she managed to raise a number of vegetables in her home garden and to can up the apples and berries which grew on her city lot. Without too much warning she began to suffer from arthritis. During the winter of 1959-60 she spent several months living in a house occupied by sister Edith in Tucson, Arizona. She thought that the mild winter temperature might help her condition, but she came back in April feeling about as bad as when she went.

She has always tried to be fair with all the people she came into contact with. She has a high sense of what is right. She has been a member of the Christian Church in Oskaloosa for some years.

FRED RUSSELL MOTT

Child number 8 was born December 21, 1898. When about two months old he became very ill with something that effected his spine. The trouble seemed to be spinal meningitis. Our parents were badly worried. It was winter weather and the nearest doctor was in Bussey, seven miles away. I believe one of our neighbors notified the doctor for us. The doctor arrived at our house early one cold morning. He had evidently been trying to keep warm in his top buggy by drinking whiskey. He was so much under the influence that the folks hesitated to let him inside the house. He did get into the house, and after seeing the baby, gave some suggestions, which were, probably helpful. After a few more anxious days and nights, the baby recovered.

When he was only a few years old he watched father doing his hog butchering. The next morning, while the family was getting dressed, Fred said, "I wish I was a hog." Father said, "Good Land! Why do you wish you were a hog?" The answer was, "So papa could shoot me." I suppose in the eyes of a small boy a hog was quite an important character on butchering day.

He attended the rural schools at Jefferson and Fairview and graduated from the eighth grade at the age of fourteen.

He remained at home on the farm until after his nineteenth birthday. On June 4, 1918, he enlisted in the U. S. Cavalry, hoping to be sent overseas. Instead he was sent to California until the time of his discharge, February 24, 1919.

He spent the next year at home, but again enlisted in the army, January 21, 1920. He was sent to Angle Island, California. May 5th. of that year, he boarded a ship which docked at Manila in the Philippines on June 1. He served as a member of the coast guard artillery in the defenses of Manila bay for two years.

On June 1, 1922, he boarded ship for return to the United States. That voyage took just one month, with stops at Japan, Midway Island and Honolulu. He finished that enlistment in the coast guard defenses of Puget Sound. After his discharge, January 20, 1923, he returned to the farm for two more years.

He again enlisted in the army January 21, 1925. This time he went to Fort George G. Mead, Maryland. He spent two three-year enlistments there as a member of the 21st. Transport Co. On January 31, 1931, he enlisted for another three-year term.

It began to look like he would become a career soldier. On September 27, 1932, he was married to Martha E. Kraft. (We always called her Ella.) Prior to her marriage to Fred, she was a widow with one little girl. Fred never had any children of his own. He found it was not very convenient to live as a married man and remain in service with Uncle Sam. On May 5, 1933, he purchased his discharge.

He went to Kansas City, where his mother was living, at a time when the country was in deep depression. He found it difficult to secure steady employment for several months. He joined the local National Guard. Through the influence of one of his buddies in the Guard, he was granted an interview with the Phillips Oil Company of Kansas City. He began work for this company September 2, 1933. His main job was pump mechanic, keeping many different kinds of pumps in running order.

On September 2, 1958, he was given special recognition by his company for completing twenty-five years service with them. He and Ella were given an airplane trip to Bartlesville, Oklahoma, with all expenses paid for three days. At a banquet in Bartlesville, where many company employees were gathered, Fred was presented with a fine wrist watch. He voluntarily retired from work with this company, on a permanent company pension June 1, 1960.

During his last four years in the army he was official chauffeur for army officers. He made many trips to Philadelphia and other eastern cities, driving for a general or a colonel. He drove to Washington, D. C. many times. Once, when in Baltimore, he visited the grave of Edgar Allen Poe. Tips, granted by army officers, often equaled his regular army pay.

He and Ella liked to travel. Before they left Maryland they visited Old Fort McHenry, where Francis Scott Key got his inspiration for writing the Star Spangled Banner. One vacation period they took a motor trip to Mexico City, Mexico. They hired a young Mexican to act as guide. It made the trip much more interesting to have a person with them who knew the country and could speak both English and Spanish. They have been in Canada and over a good part of the United States.

They now own a lake shore lot, 60 x 200 feet, at Grove, Oklahoma, where they hope to build a cottage soon, after they can sell their house in Kansas City, Kansas.

Fred has been a member of the American Legion and the Odd Fellows Lodge. He does some fishing and he likes to keep track of the standing of the different baseball clubs.

HAZEL IRENE MOTT

Child number 9 was named Hazel Irene. She was born October 14, 1900. When I left home she was twelve years old. Most of what I write about her has been told me by herself or by other members of the family.

The third year that I was teaching I went home for a short visit. The smaller children who were in school at that time wanted me to visit their school at Jefferson Schoolhouse. One afternoon I went over for a short visit. Hazel tells me she saw me coming during a recess period and said, "O, here comes my brother." One of the neighbor boys said, "He is not your brother. He is just your half-brother." Hazel had not heard the term half-brother before. She was puzzled. How, she thought, could I be a half-brother without being cut in two pieces.

At this time she is giving me quite a little assistance in collecting facts for use in my story. One day when I was not at home, our parents had gone to Oskaloosa. They left Hazel at home with Nora. When Nora told Hazel to do some work Hazel refused. Nora gave Hazel a beating. At that time Hazel was ten or eleven years old. She decided she would not stay home any longer with Nora. She started to walk five miles to the town of Buxton where her Aunt Leona Fisher lived. She had walked about three miles when she thought of Edith, her baby sister. She decided she could not run away and never see her little sister again. She turned and walked back home. Nobody had missed her. When she told them how she had run away they could scarcely believe it.

Hazel and Myrtle, two years younger, had a number of adventures together. One time the creek, which flowed through our farm was nearly bankfull, following a heavy rain. Hazel, Myrtle, Earl and Ruth all went to the creek bridge to see the flood. Myrtle, who seemed to be more daring than some ot the others, took hold of the floor of the bridge and let her feet touch the water. Soon she was tired of hanging by her hands, but when she tried to pull herself back up to the bridge, her arms were so tired she could not get back. She was about ready to say goodbye and float away in the swirling water, when all three of the other children took hold of her arms and by pulling hard, managed to get her out of danger.

At one time Ziba had dug an airshaft, about 30 feet deep to supply air to his coal mine. He made the shaft deep enough to collect extra water from the mine. He had arranged a rope, bucket and windlass at the top of the shaft so water could be drawn out as it accumulated. One evening Pearl, Hazel, and Myrtle went to the air-shaft. Myrtle asked the other girls to let her get into the bucket and be lowered down to the water. The two girls let her down to the water and then turned the windlass and pulled her up again. There was no mishap that day, but when Fred tried to draw a bucket of water the next day, the rope broke and let the bucket tumble back into the water. Luckily the rope did not break the day before.

I tell in another chapter how when the roof of the house caught fire, Hazel, Myrtle, and Ruth saved the house from complete destruction by their quick action in fighting the fire.

Hazel graduated from the eighth grade of the rural school when she was fourteen. On November 23, 1918, she was married to Harry Alsup. They lived in Oskaloosa until Harry's death on June 19, 1919. The widow collected some government life insurance which Harry was carrying.

She went to Kansas City and worked for a while as a clerk at a soda fountain. Next she entered the Ransomarian Business College in Kansas City. She took a six

month's secretarial course consisting of shorthand, typing, spelling, English, bookkeeping, and rapid calculation. She had the highest grade in spelling of any member of her class. She entered a contest in the use of contractions in shorthand and won the contest.

On July 19, 1924, she married Bob Pike. They lived in Compton, California for several months after their marriage. There Bob found plenty of work at his trade of plasterer.

They have lived for several years now at 1620 North 25th. St., Kansas City, Kansas. Bob is retired. They have never had any children.

A few years ago Bob built a two-wheel trailer to pull behind his car. The trailer was fitted with a bed and cooking facilities. It was wired so they could have electric light, drawing current from the car battery. With the car and trailer they drove to California and then northward up the coast. They also visited Wesley in Idaho. By traveling this way a trip of some weeks cost them very little.

Hazel has done a lot of sewing for her mother and other members of her family. She makes most of her own dresses. She has made ladies' coats. She has done all the interior decorating of her house for several years. She likes to collect antiques. She has a grandfather's clock and a breakfront china cabinet, both of cherry wood, which she and Bob have refinished in natural color. She has a fair collection of old style dishes.

She is taking an active interest in the Chelses Park Christian Church, Kansas City, Kansas, where she is a member. She has been historian and president of her Sunday School class. She has a happy, humorous disposition. When she read a little of my story, she said, "Why don't you put some humor into it?" None of the other ten of my half-brothers or sisters looked much like their mother, but when I look at Hazel I almost think Laura Ethel Mott has returned, because Hazel looks so much like her mother.

MYRTLE LOUISE MOTT

Child number 10 was born August 30, 1902. She is one of the family that I never got well acquainted with. She was only about five years old when I left home to go to school in Oskaloosa. I was home so little after that time that I did not see her much while she was growing up. I have been told by other members of the family that she used to be something of the adventurous type. In another place I tell about two adventures which she had.

She completed the eighth grade work in the rural school. When she was about eighteen she went to Kansas City, Kansas, where sister Mabel was living. Myrtle soon got a job with the telephone company in Kansas City. She worked for a number of years as telephone operator. She met a man by the name of Street. They were married but after a few years they decided they would be better off alone. A legal separation was granted.

Myrtle was transferred to a job as telephone operator at Little Rock, Arkansas. She worked there for several months. While that was her first introduction to a state that was truly southern, she has spent most of her life since that time living in the South. She read the life of Robert E. Lee and became more southern than some who have lived there all their lives.

Myrtle visited our home in Dayton, Iowa, in the year 1932. She seemed to be taking life rather seriously then. On June 30, 1933, she was married to George McCormack. The couple spent one night with us while on their honeymoon. I was glad to see that Myrtle appeared to be quite happy at that time.

The couple immediately moved to Pearland, Texas, a small town which is now almost a suburb of Huston. They were living only a few miles from Huston and George was working in Huston when the ship loaded with chemicals blew up in the Huston harbor. George worked for a time with an oil company. He did some driving with a travel agency.

Once or twice I received a letter from Myrtle telling me how George used to go into the shallow water of the Gulf of Mexico and spear large fish. Another time she told me about picking up a bushel basket full of oysters in the gulf waters. They had to get some instruction from an old hand in the oyster business before they could remove the oysters from their shells. She also wrote about the mild winters on the gulf coast. Vegetables and fruits grow and ripen there nearly all winter.

One or two times Myrtle's family had to ride out a hurricane which struck their house. All windows were boarded up before the storm arrived and for nearly three days the people remained inside and waited for the storm to pass.

One son, named Eddie, was born to the McCormacks. When he was in his early teens, his father died suddenly of a heart attack. About as soon as Eddie was old enough to qualify he joined the U. S. Navy. Myrtle was very lonely and began to look at life with some bitterness. She learned the trade of a wallpaper hanger. She made good wages at this work and she supported herself by other work.

After his hitch in the Navy, Eddie came home. He had learned the barber trade while in service. He married and is now operating his own barber shop in Pearland. Myrtle is now a three times grandmother. She and her son live near each other.

In the fall of 1960, Myrtle came to Chariton. I was very much disappointed that she could be with us only a few hours. I would have enjoyed having a chance to get better acquainted with her.

Since she has lived in the South so long, she has adopted the viewpoint of most southerners regarding the race problem.

RUTH PHYLLIS MOTT

Child number 11, named Ruth, was born May 10, 1905. She was the first one of the family to attend high school. She took the regular four year course at Bussey and graduated with the class of 1924. In order to help pay her high school expenses she worked as a maid for a druggist family most of the time she was attending the Bussey school. In the summer of 1924, she took a six weeks normal training course at Penn College. She secured a teachers certificate and became the teacher at the Riverside school that fall. She completed the year, but decided she did not want to make teaching her main work. She never taught again.

In the spring of 1925 she took the trip to California with Earl and Wesley. The Ford in which the trio was traveling had only one seat. They sometimes felt rather crowded and one night as they were driving in the dark, Ruth sat out on the running board and tried to hold on to some of their equipment. As the car struck a bump in the road Ruth fell off. A large can she was holding made quite a little noise as it fell. Wesley was driving. He heard the noise and stopped to pick Ruth up. If the can had not made so much noise the driver might not have noticed Ruth was not on the car. She might have been left alone on the road in the dark. One day as they were driving over the mountain road a wheel came off the car. They stood and watched it roll a long way down the trail. They were delayed for some time getting the wheel and putting it back on the car.

After reaching Compton, California Ruth got a job as maid and worked in California, for about one year. The next year she went to Kansas City, where her mother had moved. She worked as a clerk in a ten-cent store in Kansas City for several months.

On June 30, 1927, she was married to Fred Thomas Newitt. The couple started west on a honeymoon, traveling by auto. They visited Yellowstone Park and then went on to Portland, Oregon. Fred, a bricklayer by trade, got work for about two months, then they traveled for a while in Canada, where perhaps Fred found more work. On the way back they visited Hazel at Compton, California. They returned to Kansas City on Armistice Day. Ruth returned to work at the dime store for several months. Then the couple moved to a forty acre farm which Fred owns a few miles outside Kansas City. They lived on the farm for about one year and Fred continued working at his trade.

Their first child, a boy, was born September 5, 1933. His name, Fred Coleman Newitt. He was doing nicely in school when he suddenly contracted the bulbar type of polio. After three days illness he died, September 27, 1946. Because of the type of disease very few people attended the funeral. The second child, Janice Elaine, was born September 22, 1936. She graduated from high school, in 1954. She took one year of college at Baker University. She also took some correspondence work and qualified as a teletype operator. She worked two or three years for T. W. A. Airlines at Kansas City airport. During those years she and her mother took a number of airplane trips. On one trip they went to Washington, D. C. On another to Los Angeles. As they were traveling on company passes, they could not always get a seat on a plane that was full of paying passengers. They were planning to board a plane one day, but were turned down because the plane was filled. That plane was one of the two that collided in mid-air over the Grand Canyon in Arizona. Another time they took a trip to New York and then spent a little time riding around over the state of Vermont, viewing the Green Mountains. On March 4, 1959, Janice was married. She is now living in Cincinnati, Ohio, and is the mother of a fine baby boy.

Early in life Ruth began having trouble with her hearing. She had a special operation on one ear. She now depends upon a hearing aid. Fred is now retired from his trade. He and Ruth have traveled by car to the Black Hills, South Dakota, Pueblo, Colorado, Carlsbad Caverns, and Pearland, Texas.

EARL MOTT

In September of 1959, I spent a very interesting twenty-four hours in company with my brother, Earl, in Kansas City, Kansas. Trena and I had driven to the city the day before and had spent the night with sister Hazel.

Before eight the next morning Earl had stopped at Hazel's house and picked me up. He then drove to the office where he is assistant superintendent of electrical distribution lines of Kansas City, Kansas.

I sat in one corner of his office while the different foremen came in to talk to Earl and get orders for work. I was introduced to a number of these men. They struck me as being men of the strong, active, outdoor type. Men who, in an emergency, can take control of a situation and restore power and electric service after it had been disrupted by lightening, sleet, flood, or tornado. They can also build power lines where they have never been before.

It was Friday morning. A light rain was falling, but the weather had been good for several days. There were no emergency problems pressing for solution that morning. As a result I noticed a relaxed feeling on the part of my brother and his men.

After giving a few preliminary orders, Earl took me on an inspection tour. We started with the office and looked over the warehouse and yard, where thousands and thousands of dollars worth of equipment and supplies are kept ready for use wherever needed. As we walked Earl pointed out many different kinds of supplies and equipment with which he seemed to be perfectly familiar.

I listened intently but I soon began to realize my vocabulary was very limited in this field. I wondered how long it would take me to start as a new recruit in electrical work and learn the words and meaning of all Earl was trying to tell me. Words and expressions like ampere, volt, 33,000 volts, 110 volts, transformer, substation, KV, underground, hot wire, ground and neutral. Inside the warehouse I saw some things with which I was, somewhat, familiar, such as miles of rope of different diameters, steel wire, copper wire, cross arms and insulators.

After our tour of the warehouse and yard, we stepped into Earl's car, which is equipped with two way radio. After making a call to the office to inform them he was going out, Earl started driving over a part of the city where he had been responsible for the construction of power lines. He is also responsible for the daily maintenance of these lines.

He pointed out where he had been in charge of foremen and an entire crew of construction workers in the erection of a power line. This line began at the generating plant and after crossing the Caw river, a busy highway and a long stretch of open fields, delivered power to a large industrial plant. I noticed the wires were suspended between high, metal towers across the river. In some places they were suspended on wood poles, from thirty to ninety feet high.

While he was showing me these lines, he was busy talking, using such words as cutover, switches, cables, power trucks, and hot sticks. He tried to tell me that both he and his men were pretty safety-conscious. They had a high safety record. However, I noticed a number of places where guy wires indicated they had buried a number of dead men. I would be willing to venture they did not even have pallbearers or clergy.

Before we went home for noon, Earl also showed me a place where a large number of wires extended through an alley and delivered power to a number of stores and business houses. Sometime before it had become necessary to replace all the old wires with new ones, because the load had become too heavy for the old lines.

The job of replacing the old with the new was assigned to Earl for his supervision. All the old wiring must be taken out. All the new wiring must be put into place. At the same time all the patrons along these lines must be continually supplied with electric current.

Under Earl's supervision, all the work was done. No man was hurt. No property was damaged, with one exception. One day rain had been falling. A crossbar was damp and it slipped out of a worker's hand and crashed through a heavy plate glass window of a big store. Earl immediately stepped to a telephone and called a glass company to replace the glass at once and send a bill to the city utility company.

I was not too surprised to learn that for this work Earl is now receiving about $800.00 per month. Friday night, at his house, I tried to learn how he had been able to qualify for this job, that pays more than is often received by graduate engineers.

We went back in our conversation and reviewed his life, from the date of his birth, October 4, 1906.

He was quite small when I left home to follow my career as a school man. On one of my short trips home I went out with Earl to follow his trap line. He was only eight or nine but he carried a small loaded revolver to use in case a skunk had been caught in his trap. Running the trap line was Earl's method of making spending money.

On December 19, 1919, Fred was home. He and Earl went hunting that day. When they brought their guns into the house they thought they unloaded them. That evening, after dark, Earl took his shotgun and set the butt of the gun on a chair. While working with the gun he pulled the trigger at the same time he had his left hand over the end of the gun barrel. He was greatly surprised to have the gun fire a charge of shot through his left hand.

Fred quickly went to one of our neighbor's, about one mile away, and phoned for a doctor to come from Bussey. The doctor came with his car and in a short time Earl was in the hospital at Oskaloosa. The doctor removed the second finger clear back to the wrist. This injury has not prevented Earl from doing all kinds of manual labor, but I understand it has kept him from passing a physical examination for military service.

For two or three years, following the accident with the gun, Earl did the farming at home for the folks. He also rented land from our neighbor to the east and farmed for himself.

While father was in the hospital at Iowa City, and before any of us suspected he would die there, Earl and Ruth started to drive an old Ford on a trip to the west coast. They picked up Wesley in Colorado and together the two boys walked up Pike's Peak.

After this experience in mountain climbing, the three started on to California. Hazel had married Bob Pike. They visited father in the hospital a few

days before father died. When our three travelers reached California, Hazel was back home at Compton, California, where Bob worked as a plasterer. Ruth got work as a maid and Earl worked a while as a laborer with a plastering crew.

During the next six months Earl traveled a great deal, mostly by bumming rides on railroad trains. He worked in Los Angeles, Stalkton, and San Francisco, Calif. He worked as a ranch hand and farm laborer in Nevada, Utah, Idaho, Wyoming and Montana. He helped thresh grain on the Crow Indian reservation in Montana. He also worked as a laborer on irrigation projects.

At another time he took a trip to Chicago and Aurora, Illinois. From there he went to Detroit, Michigan, Cincinnati, Ohio, through Tennessee and on to Atlanta, Georgia. During this trip he worked as a baker's helper or at any other work he could get to do.

After his mother moved to Kansas City he went down there and lived with her. He worked for the Kansas City Telephone Company, now the Southwest Bell Company, for about three years, first as a common laborer and later as foreman of a line gang.

For twenty-three months he was a member of the Kansas State Guard. When 350 men from the Kansas State prison, went on strike inside the coal mines, Earl's company was ordered into the mines to preserve order. It was a rather ticklish situation to be inside a dark mine with rioting prisoners.

Later he worked on the signal gang for the Santa Fee railroad, the Caw Valley railroad, and the Kansas City Terminal railroad. During the time he was working for the telephone company and the railroads he kept asking questions of his fellow workers and his foremen. "Why do we do this this way?" He found most of the men were just doing the work as they were directed to do it. Why? They did not care to know.

Earl could not be satisfied to work simply because he was told to do things a certain way. He kept asking questions. He went to the public library and got books on electricity. He studied them carefully. He bought other books and read them to get answers to his questions.

Finally the day came when the Board of Public Utilities, of Kansas City, Kansas, was looking for an assistant superintendent. Earl was ready and took the job, which he has held for more than five years. Although the work is quite exacting and requires a great deal of his time and energy, he seems to be doing a good job. He is looking forward to a time, in the near future, when he can retire from such a responsible position. Perhaps he will retire soon after his only son, David, graduates from his mechanical engineering course at the State College, Manhattan, Kansas.

On the evening I visited him, I asked him if he was off duty until Monday. He replied, "Unless there is an emergency, I can forget it until Monday." I was pleased to hear that, as he seemed to be pretty tired.

Soon after daylight the next morning the telephone rang in Earl's bedroom. He dressed quickly and left the house, before he had eaten breakfast. After a little while he came back for breakfast. Then he told me that a high power wire had come in contact with a tall wood pole and had set the pole on fire. He had to go to the switch and shut off current on that line before more damage could be done.

I went out with him, after he had phoned some of his foremen, the warehouse and other places and ordered the men, equipment, and supplies needed to replace that 75 foot pole with another.

We watched the gang remove the wires from the old pole, dig a hole for the new pole and set it in place. Next the old pole was taken down and carted away, where it could be used in another location where a shorter pole would do. These emergency repairs took up most of the day for Earl. On this job he is subject to call at any and all hours, any day of the week.

On January 27, 1931, he married Louisa Zigler, who grew up on a farm a few miles from Bussey, Iowa. Together Earl and his family have traveled over a good part of the United States. They all greatly enjoy the beauty of natural scenery.

With male companions, and more recently with his son, he has hunted in Iowa, Missouri, South Dakota, Idaho, Utah, Colorado, and Ontario, Canada. In addition to squirrel, rabbit, and quail, he has hunted pheasant, ducks, geese, white tail and mule deer, bear, mountain sheep, elk and moose.

He is an ardent fisherman. He has plenty of patience to fish in deep water, not caring to bother with crappies or bluegills, but waiting to hook a large catfish. Frequently his patience has paid off with the capture of a good, large fish.

He has spent a lot of time as advisor for a Boy Scout troop at one of the churches in Kansas City. He has accompanied Explorer scouts on a number of expeditions. Once he took his boys to New Salem, Illinois. From there the boys hiked over the Lincoln trail to Lincoln's tomb in Springfield. Another time he took the boys to Superior National Forest, Ontario, Canada. He accompanied them on a one-hundred mile cance trip in that country. Another time they took a one week's cruise on a ship in Puget Sound.

In addition to his hobbies of hunting, fishing and scouting, he enjoys building trailer equipment to use on hunting trips. He has his own boat with outboard motor. He collects old firearms. He reloads his own rifle shells. He is a member of the Masonic Lodge.

At one time he served as a local officer of a labor union, while a strike was in progress. He stated that was a difficult position. Perhaps at such a time both sides may be a little unfair.

No doubt the fact he is such an outdoors man and thoroughly enjoys manly sports, gives him an additional advantage when it comes to handling men on the job. From what I was able to observe, all the men under his direction have a great deal of respect for him.

EDITH LAVERNE MOTT

Number thirteen of the baker's dozen was born September 27, 1910. I was twenty-three years old that December. I was at the old home so little, after that date, that I would not be able to write much about her were it not for the fact she sent me a very good letter in which she wrote her own biography. With a few alterations, here is what she said:

"I never thought I could contribute much to your book but will write a few facts that you wanted. As to my childhood, I remember it as being a very happy one and just a normal one. I guess the things I remember most is wandering through the timber by myself, or with Major (the dog). I used to tell him all my troubles, which were mostly the fact I had to carry water and pick up cobs. I thought if the day ever came when I wouldn't have to do that I would be grown up. You know Old Major was just as old as I was, so he was just like a real person to me.

I also remember how I used to ride Nellie all over the country-side. To me she was the only horse that ever lived. I thought my heart would break when we moved to Eddyville and sold her.

As to my education, I was a Junior in high school when Mother and I had to move to Kansas City. As we didn't have any money, I had to go to work. I had various jobs in the next year, as they did not hire anyone until they were sixteen. So I had to fib about my age and as soon as they found out I wasn't sixteen, I was laid off. I guess in all I had five different jobs that year.

As soon as I was sixteen I got on with the Southwestern Bell Telephone Co. and worked there fifteen and one half years. In 1932 I was transferred to St. Joseph, Missouri. I worked as an operator and later was transferred to the construction department, doing clerical work.

I forgot to say I went to night school several different times and took typing and shorthand and some business administration. Have taken courses in Spanish since coming to Tucson.

I was married January 9, 1939, to George Ray Durrant. On September 19, 1942, our son was born, named George Ray Jr. On January 31, 1945, our daughter, Linda Susan was born.

I moved to Phoenix, Arizona in 1949 as George had chronic sinus trouble. I have been in Tucson, off and on ever since.

Since my children grew up a little I have had several different jobs. I worked for a year as a PBX operator at a furniture store. I then quit to go to North Platte, Nebraska for the summer to be with Tim (her husband). Worked at St. Mary's Hospital for six months as a PBX operator and admitting clerk. I quit there and we managed a motel for the owner. Then I got a serious skin condition which forced me to stay home for almost a year. I am now a cashier at McClellan's Dollar Store (in Tucson).

I also worked as a waitress in Glenwood, Iowa. I worked in a grocery store there. I have done a lot of things for which I am grateful as I don't have much trouble getting a job. I even worked three days as a nurse's aid in a rest home, but quit that job fast. I couldn't stand it another day.

About my father, as he was sixty-three when I was born, I, of course, only remember him as being an old man, or so it seemed to me at the time. He was quite stern with me and didn't tolerate much foolishness. But I seemed to realize, even then, that he was right and was doing it for my good. I always felt he was very fair with me if I was with him.

My earliest impression of him was that he was an elderly gentleman with white hair and beard. He reminded me of a picture which we had of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. I think this impression may have had something to do with the fact I loved Longfellow's works. I later purchased his complete works, which I still love to read.

I remember my father as being a gentle, kind and fair man. However, when necessary he could be very stern and forbidding. He had certain standards which he expected his children to live by. He would not tolerate much deviation from these rules. But these same standards, which he laid down for me, have served me well. I am sorry my children never saw or knew their grandfather.

As I said he could be very stern. I never forgot what a maple switch felt like on my bare legs.

I can only remember him for about seven or eight years, but when I rocked my own children, I would think about how he used to rock me and sing "Waterloo". Some lullaby, wasn't it? But I liked it then.

I think it speaks well of him that even though his children were mostly grown, as long as they stayed in his house, his word was law. They all showed him the respect and consideration he deserved."

Author's Note:

I never heard father sing about the Battle of Waterloo. I think sister was thinking of the song about the Battle of New Orleans, which went in part like this:

He (Andrew Jackson) led them down to Murphy's swamp.
The ground was low and mucky.
There stood John Bull in martial pomp
And here was Old Kentucky.

"Kentucky, Kentucky, the hunters of Kentucky."

FRANK LESLIE MOTT

In a number of chapters of this story I tell about my early childhood on the farm. The winter I was seventeen was the last time I attended country school as a pupil.

In the fall of 1908 I enrolled in classes at the old Oskaloosa College academy, at the west end of West High Avenue. I was trying to pay for most of my expenses by doing janitor work for the college. After about four months of study I was forced to leave classes because of a nervous breakdown.

The next summer I worked for George Ross at his livery barn in Buxton, Iowa. That fall I worked on two different farms. The next summer I worked for the Consolidated Coal Co. at Buxton. During that time I helped tear down the wooden tipple for mine No. 11. I also helped wreck buildings and load materials and machinery from mine No. 13 to be shipped to other mines. I worked several days around mine No. 12. I spent a number of days working on the erection of a dirt dump at mine No. 14.

In January of 1910, I was back at the Oskaloosa College. I carried a full-time course of study until the end of the college year. That summer I wrote a teacher's examination and received a third grade county teacher's certificate.

I taught a seven months term of school at the Brock school in the north-western part of Jefferson township. The next year I taught a six-months term at the Center school in Jefferson township.

The year 1912-13 I taught high school subjects at the rural high school, known as the Bear Creek School in Dallas county, near Redfield. Since that time I have been school superintendent at the Truesdale Consolidated school in Buena Vista county. Superintendent of schools at Dayton, Iowa, and at Sewal, Iowa.

I worked as vocational agriculture teacher at Corwith, Mapleton, and Sewal, Iowa. I was high school principal at Dayton a number of years. All together I spent twenty-six years as a teacher in Iowa public schools.

During that twenty-six years I earned two college degrees. First, the Bachelor of Arts degree in Education, Highland Park College, Des Moines, Iowa 1917. Second, the Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Education, Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa 1924. I changed my teacher's certificate from a third grade county to a State Superintendent's Public School certificate good for life.

From the time I was twenty until I was thirty-four years of age, all my energies were bent on completing my college training. I had to make up the equivalent of high school in the college academy. Then I took what amounted to six years of college work.

Even now, I often dream that I am young, unmarried, and trying to go to college. Always there is difficulty because of lack of money for college expenses or I am failing to make my grades in my college classes. I suppose I will continue to have that dream, in slightly varying forms, until the time when I no longer dream at all.

In 1943 I left the work of the school room. After working several weeks that summer as field supervisor for rural carriers for the Des Moines Sunday

Register, I applied for work with the War Manpower commission at Centerville, Iowa.

When the war ended the War Manpower commission was given to the states. In Iowa it became the State Employment service. I was in that work for nearly ten years, under the two organizations.

The central office for our five county area, Appanoose, Davis, Lucas, Monroe and Wayne, was at Centerville. For several months I was in charge of the sub-office in Chariton. I was in charge of the sub-office at Albia for a longer period. Part of the time I was working directly from the Centerville office and driving all over the five counties as occasion demanded. Some years I put twenty thousand miles on my car. Most of it doing the regular required driving in connection with my work.

After we left school work we settled in Chariton, Iowa. In 1946 we bought a large frame house at 203 South 12th. Street. Ever since we moved into this house we have maintained apartments for rent.

In 1953 I resigned from my work with the State Employment Service. That fall we bought a house about twenty miles from here. We moved that house on to the vacant lot we had just south of our house. We have rented that house to tennants every month since the winter of 1953.

The next spring I was getting restless. I did not have enough work to occupy my time. I heard there was a vacancy in the office of city treasurer in Chariton. I applied for the position and was appointed by the city council to fill a vacancy left by Miss Maggie Beam. When the time for which I was appointed expired, I entered the regular city election and was elected to the same job for a two-year term. Two years later I was elected for a term of four years. This position requires an average of four hours work per day. I enjoy the work and it allows me time to assist in keeping up our apartment house. I also have time to raise a big garden. I thoroughly enjoy planting seeds and watching them grow. Best of all, I enjoy harvesting a good crop of fresh vegetables.

Now in my seventy-third year, I am surprised to find myself elected as commander of our local American Legion post, where I have served nearly eight years as local chaplain.

I united with the Church of Christ at Old Bethel, in Jefferson township, the winter I was seventeen. Before Trena and I were married I united with the Lutheran Church. Wherever we have lived, we have taken part in the work of some church organization in our community. While in Mapleton, Iowa, we both worked in the Methodist Church. Since coming to Chariton both of us have been Sunday School teachers in the Lutheran Church. I have been a member of the board of Deacons for a number of years. My attitude towards other church denominations is, "You go to your church and I'll go to mine. But let's walk along together."

While attending Highland Park College, Des Moines, Iowa, in the fall of 1913, I attended a social function one evening. At this gathering both the young men and the young women of the college were given cards. When a young man was introduced to a young lady she wrote her name on his card. He in turn wrote his name on her card. In this way a student met a number of possible dates in the course of one evening. The girl who headed my card that night was named Trena Greguson. She grew up on a farm in Northwest Iowa near the town of Inwood.

I talked with a number of young ladies that evening but I was not especially impressed with any of them. Several months later I was in the same college class with Miss Greguson. One night a number of students planned to attend a theatre party in down-town Des Moines. I invited Miss Greguson to be my partner for the evening. We rode the street cars to the theatre and returned to the campus the same way. As we walked across the campus, on the way to the girls' dormitory, the warm hand of my partner slipped into mine. The thought immediately entered my mind, "Some day she will be my wife."

We were married May 27, 1918, after nearly five years of acquaintence. In 1958 we celebrated our fortieth wedding anniversary. Our first child, Dorothy Louise, was born at Corwith, Iowa, January 21, 1920. Alice Virginia was born at Mapleton, Iowa, December 14, 1921. Clyde Lawrence was born at Dayton, Iowa, March 29, 1927.

Dorothy married Henry W. Keltner at Ames, Iowa, August 3, 1946. Alice married Paul George Young at Chariton, Iowa, January 12, 1947. Clyde married Marlius Eloise Roberts at Ames, Iowa, January 10, 1948.

Our married life has been interesting and happy. For many years we had a hard struggle to make a decent living for the family. My school salaries were never very high as compared to incomes of other workers. Many different years we raised a big garden to increase our food supply. Trena canned many, many quarts of fruits, vegetables and meat for our pantry shelves.

She made nearly all her dresses and practically all the clothing for the girls when they were small. When I was compelled to spend fifty-eight days in the hospital, she kept the family together and carried on as best she could.

When the depression struck us, in the late thirties, and it was practically impossible for me to find work at decent wages, Trena took a job outside the home to help pay our living expenses. After the children were gone, she worked several years as a nurse's aide in a local nursing home, helping me to pay for the property we now own.

In this year of 1960, we are both very thankful that we are enjoying good health. Each day we try to accomplish something worthwhile, but we are slowing down. When we become tired, we stop for a little rest. I believe our outlook on life could almost be summed up in the lines of an unknown writer, which I quote:

"Dear God, help me to grow old gracefully,
And without bitterness!
Teach me to view calmy
The changes in the fragil mechanism
Which I have used so long.
Deliver me from envy
Of young people and their happiness,
Make me willing to accept
Changes and new beliefs.
Enable me to face without protest
Life's inevitable afternoon.
Then grant me a radiant sunset
And a night of peace."

FAMILY STATISTICS

REGISTER OF BIRTHS

1.	Laura Mabel Mott	October 29, 1883
2.	Bertha Viola Mott	December 4, 1885
3.	Frank Leslie Mott	December 11, 1887
4.	Nora Grace Mott	November 15, 1892
5.	Ziba Dale Mott	March 21, 1894
6.	Wesley Homer Mott	December 14, 1895
7.	Ida Pearl Mott	September 9, 1897
8.	Fred Russell Mott	December 21, 1898
9.	Hazel Irene Mott	October 14, 1900
10.	Myrtle Louise Mott	August 30, 1902
11.	Ruth Phyllis Mott	May 10, 1905
12.	Earl Mott	October 4, 1906
13.	Edith Laverne Mott	September 27, 1910

FAMILY STATISTICS

REGISTER OF MARRIAGES

1.	Bertha to John Elder	January 16, 1907
2.	Mabel to Samuel Stroud	August 17, 1909
3.	Nora to Arthur Martin	February 17, 1912
4.	Frank to Trena Greguson	May 27, 1918
5.	Ziba to Callie Harding	February 2, 1921
6.	Pearl to William Thomas	March 1, 1921
7.	Hazel to Robert Pike	July 14, 1924
8.	Ruth to Fred Newitt	June 30, 1927
9.	Earl to Louisa Zigler	January 27, 1931
10.	Fred to Martha E. Kraft	September 27, 1932
11.	Myrtle to George McCormack	June 30, 1933
12.	Edith to George Durrant	January 9, 1939
13.	Wesley to Margaret Wills	September 20, 1939

FAMILY STATISTICS

REGISTER OF DEATHS

1.	Ziba Dale Mott	September 20, 1922
2.	Aaron Coleman Mott (buried May 8, 1925)	May 3, 1925
3.	Laura Ethel Mott (Christian)	July 31, 1948
4.	Nora Grace Mott (Martin)	October 29, 1952